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## THESIS

INTELLIGENCE:  
A PERSONAL, INHERENT, FUNCTION  
OF COMMAND

by

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June 1992

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**Intelligence: A Personal,  
Inherent, Function of Command**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis suggests that commanders must accept the responsibility for intelligence as a personal, inherent function of command. Commanders most dissatisfied with intelligence least understand its function, capabilities, and limitations. They lack a thorough understanding of intelligence, thus they fail to directly participate in the process, and their involvement is critical to success. Intelligence doctrine--the foundation of instruction in professional schools--fails to increase understanding and forcefully encourage the commander's participation. This thesis further suggests that doctrine reinforces past and present practices relating to intelligence, causing many commanders to fail to see intelligence as a personal, inherent, function of command.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Intelligence is too important to be left to intelligence officers.

Anonymous<sup>1</sup>

A successful commander must be a good intelligence officer.

Lieutenant General Chamberlin, USA<sup>2</sup>

### A. OVERVIEW

A successful combat intelligence effort depends on the vital bond that exists between the commander and his intelligence officer. Combat-experienced commanders and intelligence officers who have had a close and successful relationship surely know this statement to be true. A command may possess, or have access to, the data that provides a near perfect picture of the battlefield situation; however, the synthesis of the information and determination with which the command acts upon it depends largely on the quality of the relationship between the commander and the intelligence officer.

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert J. Boasso, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, "Intelligence Support to Operations: The Role of Professional Military Education, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, (October 1988), Research Report No. AN-ARI-88+1, quoted in Michael I. Handel, ed., Intelligence and Military Operations, (London: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1990), 21.

<sup>2</sup>Chamberlin, Lieutenant General, USA, forward to Intelligence is for Commanders, by Lieutenant Colonels Robert R. Glass and Phillip B. Davidson, USA (Harrisburg, PA: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1948), i.

Commanders and intelligence officers work toward a common purpose: the application of combat power at the decisive time and place, to accomplish the mission at the lowest possible cost. Although their opinions may diverge and disagreements will occur, this task must underlay all interaction between commander and intelligence officer. When this condition exists, the nature of the relationship is such that, ". . . it resembles a pair of shears, so joined in the middle that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them."<sup>3</sup>

The commander-intelligence officer relationship can be difficult to establish and delicate to maintain. Given the importance of the command-intelligence team to the success of the command in combat, one would expect the relationship to establish itself as a matter of routine, yet such is not always the case. "It is established as a result of a great

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<sup>3</sup>Sydney Smith (1771-1845) as quoted by Lady Holland in *Memoir*, ch.11, 363; in The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, 3d ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 511. The entire quote refers to a marriage. Field Marshal von Hindenburg made a similar reference to his relationship with his first General Staff officer, General Ludendorff, as "a happy marriage. . . . Thoughts and actions merge, and the words of one man are often just the expression of the thoughts and feelings of the other." Arguably, the relationship between commander and operations officer and commander and intelligence officer are slightly different; however, the spirit is the same. Quoted in Christian O.E. Millotat, Oberst i.G., German Army, "The Prussian German General Staff System and Its Impact on the General and Admiral Staff Officers of the Federal Armed Forces of Today," study project for the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1991, p.23.

deal of persistent, conscious effort, and is likely to disappear when the effort is relaxed."<sup>4</sup> While this statement may be true of the relationship between the commander and any of his subordinates, it is especially applicable to the commander and his intelligence officer. The accounts of friction between command and intelligence fill chapters, and in some cases, entire volumes of works. Recognizing that intelligence officers contribute to this friction, the commanders are nevertheless in the best position to influence change. The focus of this study, therefore, is on the commander.

#### **B. NATURE OF THE PROBLEM**

This thesis suggests that commanders must accept the responsibility for intelligence as a personal, inherent function of command. Commanders most dissatisfied with intelligence least understand its function, capabilities, and limitations. They lack a thorough understanding of intelligence, thus they fail to directly participate in the process, and their involvement is critical to success. Intelligence doctrine--the foundation of instruction in professional schools--fails to increase understanding and forcefully encourage the commander's participation. This thesis further

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<sup>4</sup>Sherman Kent, Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), 180.

suggests that doctrine reinforces past and present practices relating to intelligence, causing many commanders to fail to see intelligence as a personal, inherent, function of command.

This thesis relies upon established theoretical and historical works detailing the record of the past; current doctrine of the U.S. Marine Corps; written and oral accounts from Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM; and personal observations and experience of the author as a regimental intelligence officer in combat.

Section II provides an overview of theory on the nature of war and its dominant characteristics. These factors describe the complex nature of the environment within which the command-intelligence relationship must function effectively and the practical limits of intelligence. Discussion includes the relationship between the Clausewitzian concepts of friction and military genius, and how they relate to intelligence.

Section III introduces the responsibilities and functions of the instruments which apply the theory of war in combat--the commander and his principal staff. Central to the importance of this section are the concepts of responsibility, authority, and the relationship between command and intelligence. Also included is a discussion of the unique status of the operations officer.



Section IV reviews the record of the distant and recent past in determining how consistently commanders view intelligence as a personal, inherent, function of command. The focus is on levels of understanding and direct participation by commanders in the intelligence activities of their commands. A recurring theme is that of responsibility and authority of the commander. This is not to fix accountability for failure; rather, it directs attention to the only individual with authority equal to his responsibility, and therefore in the best position to influence positive change--the commander.

Section V examines intelligence doctrine, primarily represented by Fleet Marine Force Manual 3-20: Commander's Guide to Intelligence, to determine its influence on past and present practices relating to intelligence. This section argues that doctrine reinforces the tendency of many commanders to view intelligence as separate and distinct from command; in effect, transferring the tacit responsibility for the command function of intelligence to the intelligence officer.

Section VI provides illustrations of that which current Marine Corps doctrine lacks: guidance to the commander as to how he can better fulfill his intelligence responsibilities. This section provides an overview of the intelligence cycle. It also discusses the importance of commander's guidance in

two phases of the cycle which are traditionally weak in terms of guidance from the commander; direction and dissemination.

Section VII concludes the thesis and provides recommendations for future action.

## II. UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF WAR

War is the realm of uncertainty; three quarters of the factors on which action in war is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty. A sensitive and discriminating judgment is called for; a skilled intelligence to scent out the truth.

Carl von Clausewitz<sup>5</sup>

### A. INTRODUCTION

Essential to a successful commander-intelligence officer relationship is a complete understanding of the nature of war. This is important for two reasons. First, both must understand that the environment in which they must function effectively is unmatched in complexity. Second, understanding the most fundamental principles of war as they relate to the command-intelligence relationship will define the practical limits of intelligence; both will know what is possible and what is not, and expectations will not exceed reality. This

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<sup>5</sup>Carl von Clausewitz, On War, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 101. On War is the most widely recognized description of the nature of war. Several other modern publications also provide graphic descriptions of the complex nature of war, from the tactical to the higher operational and strategic levels: S.L.A. Marshall, Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1978); John Keegan, The Face of Battle (New York: The Viking Press, 1976); Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War (New York: The Free Press, 1990); and Richard K. Betts, Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defense Planning (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1982).

section of the thesis answers the following questions: What is war, and what are its dominant characteristics? How do those factors define the practical limits of intelligence? How does the Clausewitzian concept of "military genius" as a means of overcoming friction integrate with intelligence?" The intent of this discussion is not to exhaustingly review every basic theory on the nature of war, rather it is to describe the complexity of the environment in which the commander and intelligence officer must function.

#### **B. THE ESSENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF WAR**

Fleet Marine Force Manual (FMFM) 1, Warfighting, includes the principal ideas of Carl von Clausewitz. In spite of the 160 years that have elapsed since On War appeared, the fundamental concepts of Clausewitz remain valid today, as evidenced by their significant influence on the doctrine of the Marine Corps. Warfighting defines the essence of war as, "a violent clash between two hostile, independent, and irreconcilable wills, each trying to impose itself on the other."<sup>6</sup> The salient components of that definition--violence, and a contest of opposing wills--interact continually in a complex and varied manner.

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<sup>6</sup>Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Fleet Marine Force Manual 1: Warfighting (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1989), 3. Also Clausewitz, 76-77.



Violence is the means by which the object in war is achieved; by inflicting human casualties and material damage on an opponent, he eventually succumbs to our will. War is also an armed contest of *opposing* human wills; as such, it is subject to the intricacies and inconsistencies of human behavior. War is not action against an inanimate object; it is against a living, reactive force, struggling to achieve the same objective as its opponent. "Thus, I am not in control: he dictates to me as much as I dictate to him."<sup>7</sup> As a result of the continuous interaction of independent, opposing, and creative human wills, there is always a greater or lesser degree of unpredictability inherent in war. The unpredictable nature of war increases when either or both sides adopt such methods as camouflage, deception, psychological operations, night movements, electronic warfare, or high-tempo operations. One or more of those activities--or an apparent lack of activity--by one or both opponents, adds to the other's difficulty in arriving at an accurate appreciation of the situation. The outcome of conflict, therefore, is much more complex than making a mathematical estimate of combat power. History provides numerous examples of forces on the losing

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<sup>7</sup>Clausewitz, 77.

side of such estimates defeating their opponents.<sup>8</sup> Debilitating physical damage and casualties are not always a prerequisite for defeat; it is the *effect* of losses a command sustains on the *mind* of the commander that results in defeat. "Positions are seldom lost because they have been destroyed, but almost invariably because the leader has decided in his own mind that the position cannot be held."<sup>9</sup> The answer to the first question posed in the introduction of this section has been answered; the essence of war is a violent clash of two hostile, independent, and irreconcilable will, each trying to impose itself on the other. Violence is the means by which the object is achieved. Clausewitz continues his analysis to discuss the dominant characteristics of war and determines that there are four: physical exertion, danger, uncertainty, and chance.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Examples include: 20th Maine at Little Round Top, Gettysburg, 1863; Company B, 2d Battalion, 24th Foot at Rorke's Drift, South Africa, 1879; 308th Infantry (The Lost Battalion), Argonne, France, 1918; German Campaign in France, 1940; 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne, Belgium, 1944; and the 1st Marine Division in the retreat from the Chosin Reservoir, Korea, 1950.

<sup>9</sup>A.A. Vandegrift, Major General, USMC, Battle Doctrine for Front Line Leaders (Third Marine Division, 1944), 7; quoted in Warfighting, 1. Vandegrift was Commanding General of 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal. He was awarded the Medal of Honor and later served as Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1944-1948.

<sup>10</sup>Clausewitz, 104. A discussion of each can also be found in Warfighting. Many other military theorists and authors mirror image Clausewitz in this regard.

Clausewitz regards *physical exertion* in war as "the most important unquantifiable factor because its limits are so uncertain."<sup>11</sup> Fatigue and exhaustion impinge not only upon physical readiness for battle, but mental readiness as well; reaction time, judgment, and critical decision-making faculties all suffer impairment from physical exertion. Perhaps the most important psychological side-effect of fatigue is that it can enhance one's sense of danger.<sup>12</sup>

The obvious *danger* in war is that of injury, disfigurement, or death; that of capture is no doubt a close second. Danger stimulates anxiety and fear, often resulting in altered judgment and behavior. Additionally, just as fatigue can enhance the perception of danger, "sustained fear in the male individual is as degenerative as prolonged fatigue, and exhausts the body energy no less."<sup>13</sup> The factors of physical exertion and danger combine to continually challenge one's physical and mental faculties. The effects are greatest upon the uninitiated: "The novice cannot pass through layers of increasing intensity of danger without sensing that here ideas

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 117.

<sup>12</sup>One of the most vivid accounts of violence, physical exertion, and danger in war, and their resulting affect on human behavior is Guy Sajer, The Forgotten Soldier (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's (US), Inc., 1990)

<sup>13</sup>S.L.A. Marshall, The Soldier's Load and the Mobility of a Nation (Quantico, VA: The Marine Corps Association, 1980), iii.

are governed by other factors, that the light of reason is refracted in a manner quite different from that which is normal in academic speculation."<sup>14</sup>

*Uncertainty* is a major factor in war, and in the relationship between commander and intelligence officer. Uncertainty is a constant companion in war, not only with regard to the enemy situation, but also to the conditions of weather, terrain, and the friendly situation. "We hardly know accurately our own situation at any particular moment, while the enemy's which is concealed from us, must be deduced from very little evidence."<sup>15</sup> Clausewitz writes that "three-quarters of all activity in war takes place in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty."<sup>16</sup> The questions that arise in the effort to gain perfect information are seemingly endless: Will the enemy defend in place, or withdraw? Will he employ chemical weapons? Is our reconnaissance patrol experiencing radio problems, or have they failed to report because they have been ambushed? Will the weather permit a helicopterborne assault tomorrow night? Can wheeled vehicles ford the river, or will we need bridging equipment? Some of the endless questions will be answerable, and some will not.

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<sup>14</sup>Clausewitz, 113.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 217.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 140, 56.



Since the time of Clausewitz, the development and increasing use of sophisticated information collection systems has done much to reduce some aspects of uncertainty, but this has also been the cause of new problems; Section VI below discusses some of these problems. For the purpose of this section of the study, it is important to recognize that absolute certainty is fundamentally impossible to achieve in war, and the Marine Corps still recognizes this today. "The very nature of war makes absolute certainty impossible; all actions in war will be based on incomplete, inaccurate, or even contradictory information."<sup>17</sup>

The final element that makes up the climate of war--chance--is also of special interest to this thesis because it interacts so closely and frequently with uncertainty. The continuous presence of uncertainty in war forces the participants to estimate and accept risk. In that context, risk is gambling that you will be right--taking a chance. Chance also consists of turns of events that cannot reasonably be foreseen and over which neither side has any control. The uncontrollable potential for chance creates psychological friction.<sup>18</sup> Clausewitz recognizes that chance increases uncertainty and interferes with all activity in war. "From the very start

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<sup>17</sup>Warfighting, 6.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 7.

there is an interplay of possibilities, probabilities, good luck, and bad. . . .<sup>19</sup> In the end, chance reduces the accuracy and predictive value of information, resulting in unreliable intelligence.<sup>20</sup>

The dominant characteristics of war--physical effort, danger, uncertainty, and chance--combine and interact continuously to form the concept of *friction*; the force that resists all action in war. Clausewitz describes friction as "the only concept that more or less corresponds to the factors that distinguish real war from war on paper."<sup>21</sup> Friction appears in several forms.

Uncertainty, fear, or indecision can cause mental friction; external sources, such as enemy action or extremes of weather and terrain can create friction; organizations can also create self-induced friction by such factors as over-complicated command and control procedures, lack of coordination and cooperation, and rules of engagement inappropriate to the tactical situation. Friction will always have a psychological as well as a physical impact, because war is a human endeavor.<sup>22</sup> Friction, like uncertainty, is impossible to

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<sup>19</sup>Clausewitz, 85-6, 101.

<sup>20</sup>Michael I. Handel, ed., Clausewitz and Modern Strategy (London: Frank Cass & Company, Limited, 1986), 118.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 119.

<sup>22</sup>Warfighting, 5.

completely eliminate in war. The greater requirement, therefore, is to adopt practices that reduce its psychological impact. S.L.A. Marshall wrote in 1947 that, ". . . it becomes a necessary part of the young officer's mental equipment for training to instill in him the full realization that in combat many things can and will go wrong without it being anyone's fault in particular."<sup>23</sup> Critical information is slow in arriving, is inaccurate or misinterpreted, or it never arrives at all; supplies are delayed; a vital piece of equipment breaks down, or is destroyed in a chokepoint, inhibiting further progress; orders are misunderstood and improperly executed; ordnance becomes stuck on aircraft weapon stations and will not release; casualties result from friendly fire; and so on. The possibilities are limitless.

The effects of friction accumulate. "Countless minor incidents--the kind you can never really foresee--combine to lower the general level of performance, so that one always falls short of the intended goal."<sup>24</sup> For example, the scheme of maneuver in an operations order, however brilliant in conception, is generally nothing more than a common basis for change. The words of von Moltke the Elder still hold true today: "No plan of operations can look with any certainty

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<sup>23</sup>Marshall, Men Against Fire, 116.

<sup>24</sup>Clausewitz, 119.

beyond the first meeting with major forces of the enemy. . . . All consecutive acts of war are, therefore, not executions of a premeditated plan, but spontaneous actions. . . ."<sup>25</sup> The components of friction and the independent will of the enemy interact continually to alter the best laid plans. In short, mistakes and unforeseen events are commonplace, and no amount of detailed planning and careful preparation can completely forestall the influence of friction. However mild or severe in degree, *disorder is the normal state of affairs in war.*<sup>26</sup> What fundamental principle can be extracted from the preceding description of the nature of war and serve as a basis for understanding and continued discussion?

**The influence of violence on human behavior and the complex interaction of opposing wills makes war a fundamentally unpredictable activity.**<sup>27</sup> That part of friction caused by uncertainty and chance has proven invulnerable to the best efforts of mankind to eliminate it and survives to this day; Operation DESERT STORM provides several good examples. Will

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<sup>25</sup>Hajo Holborn, "The Prusso-German School: Moltke and the Rise of the General Staff," in Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age, e.d. Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 289. Also in Warfighting, 9: "Each encounter in war will usually tend to grow increasingly disordered over time. As the situation changes continuously, we are forced to improvise again and again until finally our actions have little, if any, resemblance to the original scheme."

<sup>26</sup>Warfighting, 9.

<sup>27</sup>Clausewitz, 86, 90, 139-140; Warfighting, 4, 6.

the Iraqis employ chemical weapons? How will the Iraqi Air Force respond to the air campaign? Where and when will the Republican Guards divisions counterattack, if at all? There is little doubt that one of the big questions in the mind of the Iraqis was, "Will the American Marines conduct an amphibious assault into Kuwait?" The uncertainty those questions create stimulates a considerable amount of friction because none of them could be definitively answered, nor will be similar questions in future conflicts. All of these questions deal with intent; a thought or concept that exists only in the mind of the opposing commander. One can estimate what the intent of his opponent is, based on the activities of his forces; however, nothing is more subject to change in what can be a matter of seconds. Plans and objectives are subject to change caused by enemy action, orders from a superior, disobedience of orders, fleeting opportunities, and mistakes of judgment. Friction is an unconquerable, inevitable, condition of war; it must not be allowed to dominate the command-intelligence relationship.

Commanders and intelligence officers who possess a mutual understanding of the nature of war find the knowledge very liberating in terms of how they view their respective responsibilities. The impossible task of accurately predicting future enemy actions all of the time, is cast aside. Ralph Peters wrote that one of our "prime cultural biases" as



Americans is that all things are knowable. "Our most obnoxious assumption--and one that has been painfully disproven over and over again--is that the dynamics of human. . . behavior are thoroughly quantifiable."<sup>28</sup> When that assumption is successfully eliminated, there is no wasted energy trying to overcome inevitable difficulties and the focus of attention and effort remains where it should be--on the enemy.

### C. FRICTION VERSUS GENIUS

The Marine Corps accepts the basic concepts of Clausewitz as valid today, in spite of the enormous advances in the physical and technical means of war that have taken place over the last 160 years. Friction, and all its component parts form a central element of those basic concepts. Another central element is that war is still "an activity of human creativity and intuition powered by the strength of the human will."<sup>29</sup> In any military organization, the center of that activity is the commander. He provides part of the counterforce that can overcome the debilitating effects of friction--"military genius." What is genius? How does genius overcome friction? What is the relationship of genius to intelligence? Clausewitz describes genius as,

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<sup>28</sup>Ralph Peters, "Intelligence Failures and the Limits of Logic," Parameters 17 (Spring 1987): 44.

<sup>29</sup>Warfighting, 15.



Any complex activity, if it is to be carried on with any degree of virtuosity, calls for appropriate gifts of intellect and temperament. If they are outstanding and reveal themselves in exceptional achievements, their possessor is called a genius.<sup>30</sup>

Genius requires "the intuitive ability to grasp the essence of a situation, the creative ability to devise a practical solution, and the strength of purpose to execute the act."<sup>31</sup> The central qualities of intellect and temperament "indispensable in a commander are character, intuition, and determination."<sup>32</sup>

Strength of character is the ability to maintain balance "during times of exceptional stress and violent emotion," and includes presence of mind as "an increased capacity for dealing with the unexpected."<sup>33</sup> S.L.A. Marshall writes that, "The test of fitness to command is the ability to think clearly in the face of unexpected contingency or opportunity."<sup>34</sup> The nature of war makes this very difficult to accomplish, thus the reason for the premium placed on this attribute. "In the dreadful presence of suffering and danger, emotion can easily overwhelm intellectual conviction, and in

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<sup>30</sup>Clausewitz, 100.

<sup>31</sup>Warfighting, 15.

<sup>32</sup>Clausewitz, 102, 104.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 103, 105.

<sup>34</sup>Marshall, Men Against Fire, 117.

this psychological fog it is . . . hard to form clear and complete insights. . . ." <sup>35</sup> Strength of character is the attribute that absorbs the tremendous shock combat delivers to the mind of the commander; it is also the foundation of the faculties that permit him to deliver an effective counterblow. This is the foremost of attributes desirable in a commander, for without it, intuition and determination could not emerge to function.

Intuition is the ability to look at a military situation and immediately see its essence, especially the key enemy weakness or weaknesses which, if exploited, can lead to a decision. <sup>36</sup> Intuition is seldom a natural ability, but one that develops through experience under pressure and constant study. Every action in war is the result of a unique combination of circumstances, and requires an original solution. Moreover, each action is influenced by those that preceded it, and those that follow. <sup>37</sup> The commander is the one who must

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<sup>35</sup>Clausewitz, 108.

<sup>36</sup>Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-3: Tactics (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1991), 16. Also Clausewitz, 102. Clausewitz uses the French term, *coup d'oeil*, which translated literally means, "stroke of the eye." It refers to "the quick recognition of a truth that the mind would ordinarily miss or would perceive only after long study and reflection.

<sup>37</sup>Warfighting, 8.

evaluate all of the factors and apply his intuition to formulate a solution unique to the present situation.

Once intuition recognizes the essence of the situation, creativity must devise a solution appropriate to the circumstances; this too, is a difficult task. The demand on the intellect at this point is more than an appreciation of what is possible and what is not; the greater requirement is to establish the purpose of the engagement in terms of its effects on the enemy. "When one comes to the *effect* of the engagement, where material success turns into motives for further action, the intellect alone is decisive."<sup>38</sup> Planning and executing a maneuver to secure an objective is relatively easy; the point that Clausewitz makes is that the commander must phrase his intent in terms that translate into a decisive effect on the enemy.

Determination in one sense is physical courage--"the highest of moral qualities in time of danger."<sup>39</sup> In the context of genius, Clausewitz is referring to the courage necessary to accept responsibility in time of danger. He writes that the purpose of determination is "to limit the agonies of doubt and the perils of hesitation when the motives

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<sup>38</sup>Clausewitz, 140-1.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 86.

for action are inadequate."<sup>40</sup> An act of temperament, determination requires the spark of intellect to bring it to life; "the mind tells a man that boldness is required and thus gives direction to his will."<sup>41</sup> Clausewitz provides a note of caution, however; "This kind of boldness does not consist in defying the natural order of things and crudely offending the laws of probability; it is rather a matter of energetically supporting that higher form of analysis by which genius arrives at a decision: rapid, only partly conscious weighing of the possibilities."<sup>42</sup>

Personal attributes alone do not make a great commander, however. Military education and practices relative to the conduct of training exercises are vital components of genius. "No activity of the human mind is possible without a certain stock of ideas: for the most part these are not innate but acquired, and constitute a man's knowledge."<sup>43</sup> Military education, complemented by constant exercise of operational

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 103.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 192. Marshal Soult echoes this thought: "What we call an inspiration is nothing more than a rapid calculation."; quoted in Major General Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven, German Army, The Power of Personality in War, translated in 1938 by the Historical Section, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA; published (Harrisburg, PA: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1955), 125-6.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 145.

judgment under pressure are key to the formation of that stock of ideas. Personal attributes and knowledge are absorbed and become almost indistinguishable; together they form an "intellectual apparatus that represent a genuine capability." That capability then manifests itself in the application of operational art in battle.<sup>44</sup>

Clausewitz considers genius as the only means available to overcome the negative effects of friction, but especially with respect to the unreliability of intelligence, the quality of which was limited by the technology of his time. The increasing sophistication of intelligence since the early 19th Century alters, but does not completely change, that view today. Commanders still do not go to battle with perfect information of the enemy, and seldom do they possess the numerical and material superiority they would like; they may even be at a disadvantage in all respects, relative to the enemy. Such disadvantages can be overcome by brilliant, aggressive leadership--military genius.

Rommel's campaigns in North Africa during World War II are a good example. Outnumbered and outgunned, Rommel's expertise in operational art--enhanced by skillful use of intelligence--enabled his forces to win several victories. Even after the combat loss of his principal intelligence

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 147.



source,<sup>45</sup> impossible supply problems, and lack of superiority in virtually every measurable category, Rommel still was a formidable opponent. This was due in large part to his military genius. How does genius integrate with intelligence to overcome friction?

As Michael I. Handel points out in Intelligence and Military Operations, even genius requires intelligence in order to make operational decisions. ". . . how does one side know that it is superior to the other without intelligence; and how does it know where to concentrate its forces, where the enemy is located, and so on?" Rommel himself acknowledges that it is not that one general is more brilliant or experienced than the other; it is a question of which general has a better appreciation of the battlefield.<sup>46</sup> Thus, genius is neither rash boldness, nor guesswork. Intelligence, whether

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<sup>45</sup>Rommel relied heavily upon Lieutenant Seeborn's Wireless Intercept Section to provide him intelligence. The company was a lucrative source, as British communication security procedures were very lax. Seeborn and most of his unit were killed defending the Panzer Army Headquarters on 10 July 1942; in F.W. von Mellenthin, Major General, Germany Army, Panzer Battles: A Study of the Employment of Armor in the Second World War (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 135. Von Mellenthin was Rommel's intelligence officer in North Africa.

<sup>46</sup>Liddel B. Hart, ed., The Rommel Papers (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1953), 122. Quoted in Guillermo A. Rodriguez, Major, USA, "Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield: Is it Worth the Effort?", monograph for the School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KA, 1991, 5.



the commander acquires it through personal reconnaissance or through an intelligence service, is inseparable from genius. According to Handel, "The military genius' intuition cannot replace intelligence; it can only function when it exploits information more adroitly than others could."<sup>47</sup> He also accurately describes how many officers today perceive excellence in the operational art as a substitute for intelligence. "Only one step away from ignoring the value of intelligence, this attitude is perpetuated in the education of military officers and thus later reflected in their long-standing underestimation of its importance."<sup>48</sup> This point develops clearly throughout the thesis.

#### D. SUMMARY

Understanding the nature of war and fundamental principles that derive from the dominant characteristics of war is a prerequisite to a successful command-intelligence relationship. The environment in which the relationship must function effectively is unmatched in complexity. War is a violent clash between armed belligerents, each determined to impose its will on the other. Each will is free to employ the physical means of force at its disposal to the limit of its creativity, and the strength of the will is difficult, if not

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<sup>47</sup>Handel, Intelligence and Military Operations, 14.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 21.

impossible to assess. The dominant characteristics of war are physical exertion, danger, uncertainty, and chance. The interaction of these characteristics in war produces friction--the force that resists all action and makes the most simple tasks difficult. As the affects of friction accumulate, confusion and disarray increase, forcing the participants to continually improvise and modify their actions in order to maintain control and balance.

Military genius is part of the counter-force that overcomes friction. Genius requires "the intuitive ability to grasp the essence of a situation, the creative ability to devise a practical solution, and the strength of purpose to execute the act." Genius must have an appreciation of the battlefield situation to act; it is neither rash boldness, nor guesswork. Genius is not a substitute for intelligence, it simply "exploits information more adroitly than others." Such is the complex nature of the environment in which the command-intelligence relationship must function effectively, and the theory of how friction and uncertainty are overcome. The instruments which apply theory in combat are the commander and his staff.

### III. COMMAND AND STAFF FUNCTIONS

One of the surest ways of forming good combinations in war would be to order movements only after obtaining perfect information of the enemy's proceedings. As it is unquestionably of the highest importance to gain this information, so it is a thing of utmost difficulty, not to say impossibility; and this is one of the chief causes of the great difference between the theory and practice of war.

Antoine Henri Jomini<sup>49</sup>

The role and function of commanding officers who make decisions without any advice, only based on their operational and strategic genius is pure fiction. Military planning and command and control have become too complex to be handled by the leader on the top alone. In this light it seems an archaic facade if one maintains this fiction at all costs.

Colonel C.O.E. Millotat, German Army, 1991<sup>50</sup>

#### A. INTRODUCTION

One should possess a basic understanding of the responsibilities of the commander and the functions of principal staff officers before discussing command and intelligence in more detail. What is command? What is the role of the staff? What is the relationship between their functions? In narrowing down the focus to the commander and the intelligence officer, this section also discusses the operations officer's

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<sup>49</sup>Antoine Henri Jomini, The Art of War (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1892), 245; quoted in Rodriguez Monograph.

<sup>50</sup>Millotat, 68.

role in the command-intelligence relationship. The point of reference here is commanders and staffs at level of Marine infantry regiment and below. This description removes the need for potentially confusing comparisons to such equivalent Marine Air Wing units as "regiment/group" and "battalion/squadron." Also, a common method of referring to a staff officer at any level is, for example, G/S-2. The intelligence officer of a general officer's staff is a G-2; for a regiment or battalion, he is an S-2. The all-encompassing reference to an intelligence officer from battalion up through a Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) as a G/S-2 will not be used except when citing other authors.

#### **B. DOCTRINAL COMMAND AND STAFF RELATIONSHIPS**

Command is the exercise of authority over a military unit by a single officer--the commander. Commensurate with the authority to command is the responsibility for all that the unit does or fails to do. Commanders may delegate a portion of their authority to a subordinate for the execution of certain tasks; however, the ultimate responsibility is the commander's, and his alone.<sup>51</sup> This is in contrast to, for example, the Prussian-German command system. Officers of the German General Staff at all levels of command are accountable

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<sup>51</sup>Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Fleet Marine Force Manual 3-1: Command and Staff Action (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1966), 1-2.

for the relevancy of their advice and bear joint responsibility with the commander. This custom is still the case today.<sup>52</sup>

Commanders at the battalion level and above have staffs to advise and assist them in the exercise of command. Staff officers provide information for, and submit recommendations to, the commander. They advise other staff officers and subordinates to the commander of his plans and policies; assist those individuals in implementing them; and determine the extent of implementation. Staff officers have no inherent authority over subordinate units of the command, neither do they possess any authority over staffs outside of the command. The commander delegates authority to his staff for performance of the technical details of staff work associated with different functions of command.

The chief of staff is the executive officer, who is also the deputy commander. He directs, coordinates and supervises the activities of the staff. Principal staff officers advise and assist the commander in four functions of command: personnel and administration (S-1); intelligence (S-2); operations and training (S-3); and logistics (S-4).<sup>53</sup> These

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<sup>52</sup>Millotat, 23.

<sup>53</sup>Staffs of general officers designate the communications-electronics officer as the G-6, and he is a member of the principal staff. Regiments and battalions have communications officers; however, they are not designated the S-6. In practice, they are



areas include all of the activities necessary for the command to sustain itself and to accomplish its mission. The officers serving in those four positions share equal status, regardless of their respective grades.

The commander may grant considerable authority to the executive officer and the principal staff for them to perform their duties. "Regardless of how much authority the commander allows his staff, he alone retains responsibility."<sup>54</sup> In practical terms, this statement means that a commander may have absolute trust and confidence in the abilities of a staff officer; so much so that the officer's actions and recommendations are seldom, if ever, the subject of scrutiny or questions by the commander. Such a circumstance is the goal of every staff officer and the desire of every commander. Nevertheless, the commander bears the ultimate responsibility for the actions and recommendations of his staff. For example, a staff officer recommends a course of action to the commander. When making his decision, the commander may incorporate the verbatim recommendation; he may modify it to a greater or lesser degree; or he may reject it out of hand. Once the commander accepts the staff officer's course of action, in whole or in part, the course of action becomes the

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principal staff officers in virtually all respects except title.

<sup>54</sup>Robert Debs Heinl, Jr., Colonel, USMC (Ret), The Marine Officer's Guide (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1977), 367.



commander's, and his alone. For this reason, shared trust and confidence between commander and staff officer is of utmost importance. For the same reason, staff officers should never presume that they know all of the commander's motives for thought and action. The commander sees situations differently than his staff, and even the best executive officer or member of the principal staff cannot bear the responsibilities of the commander.<sup>55</sup>

The nature of the duties inherent in the four principal functions of command tends to form two distinct, but interdependent groups: the first is administration and logistics, and the second is intelligence and operations. Although the commander is ultimately responsible for all four, it is common practice for him to delegate his authority to the executive officer for the direction and supervision of personnel (S-1) and logistical (S-4) matters. This practice does not necessarily preclude the executive officer from performing his duty as chief of staff, nor does it necessarily preclude his participation in intelligence (S-2) and operational (S-3) matters. Executive officers frequently perform all of those functions, and perform them very well. Much depends on the preferences of the commander and the conditions of combat.

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<sup>55</sup>Peter Morosoff, Lieutenant Colonel, USMC, "Intelligence for Commanders," Marine Corps Gazette 74 (August 1990): 67; also von Freytag-Loringhoven, 147.

Such an arrangement simply copes with the increasing scope and complexity of commanding a modern combat unit in battle. It allows the commander to devote more time to focus on leadership and combat decisions, while the executive officer ensures the necessary support is available to execute the commander's will. Remaining are the officers that primarily--but not exclusively--determine the activities that relate to maneuver and fire support: the commander, the intelligence officer, and the operations officer. Before discussing the dynamics of the relationship between individuals, one should understand the relationship between the functions they perform. What is the connection between command and intelligence?

#### **C. THE COMMAND--INTELLIGENCE CONNECTION**

The commander must consider four major variables before adopting a plan, or concept of operations. These four imponderables always appear in the same form, yet are never identical to those in any previous situation. They are 1) friendly capabilities and the ability of the 2) enemy, 3) weather, and 4) terrain to influence the mission. Three of the four variables to consider in operational decision-making fall under the command function of intelligence.

Intelligence is the collection, analysis, and synthesis of information relating to the enemy situation, as well as the terrain, and the weather as they affect friendly operations.

The purpose of intelligence is to reduce the unknown factors of those three imponderables to the maximum extent possible. In doing so, intelligence reduces uncertainty and risk by describing the area of operations and the enemy situation, particularly by identifying enemy strengths to avoid and weaknesses to exploit; it is the commander's means of determining the decisive time and place to strike the enemy.<sup>56</sup> Intelligence is therefore an essential component of combat power. Combat power is the total destructive force one can exert on an enemy at a given time. Components of combat power may be tangible, such as numerical superiority in men and equipment; some may be less tangible, such as intelligence which indicates to the commander when and where to strike the enemy; and some components are wholly intangible, such as an enemy's willingness to fight.<sup>57</sup> The product of the components equals the unit's combat power.

Operational plans logically develop from intelligence, and this establishes the inextricable link between intelli-

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<sup>56</sup>Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Fleet Marine Force Manual 3-20: Commander's Guide to Intelligence (Washington, D.C.:Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1991), 1-1; Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Fleet Marine Force Manual 3-21: MAGTF Intelligence Operations (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1991), 1-1. These two publications contain intelligence doctrine for the Marine Corps. A MAGTF is a Marine Air-Ground Task Force. Also in Shipley Thomas, Lieutenant Colonel, USAR, S-2 in Action (Harrisburg, PA: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1940), 10.

<sup>57</sup>Warfighting, 30.

gence and operations. "Intelligence is not knowledge for knowledge's sake alone, but for the practical matter of taking action."<sup>58</sup> A commander with good intelligence knows the nature of the terrain his forces must negotiate, the conditions of weather that exist, and how the combined effects of both will influence his plans. He combines that knowledge with facts relative to the enemy situation, especially the critical enemy weakness. The composite enables him to use available friendly forces to adopt a task organization, scheme of maneuver, and fire support plan that will achieve a decisive result. Maneuver forces and their supporting fires can concentrate in order to achieve relative superiority at the decisive point, even if absolute superiority is not possible. Knowing the strength and location of other enemy forces that can influence the mission permits time-distance calculations to determine how soon those forces can interfere with friendly plans. It is equally important to identify what is not known about the enemy, weather, or terrain. This knowledge enables the commander to intensify efforts to find out, or to develop contingency plans that will enable him to carry out his mission, regardless of enemy actions to inter-

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<sup>58</sup>Kent, 180.

fere, or of the influence of weather and terrain.<sup>59</sup> The initial decision made, the commander uses intelligence during battle to make further operational decisions appropriate to changing conditions. Marine Major A.C. Bevilacqua provides an eloquent summation by stating that, "Bereft of combat intelligence . . . the commander's decisionmaking is reduced to haphazard guesswork, and maneuver becomes a minuet of the blind."<sup>60</sup> The *functions* of command and intelligence are therefore inseparable; one cannot speak of one without also addressing the other. The same condition exists as relates to the commander and his operations officer; one cannot speak of one without including the other. What is the nature of the relationship between commander and operations officer, and how does that affect the relationship between commander and intelligence officer?

#### D. THE OPERATIONS OFFICER

The relationship between the intelligence and the operations officer should be the closest among the principal staff. It is the commander's responsibility to ensure their relation-

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<sup>59</sup>Commander's Guide, 1-1. Also Stedman Chandler, Lieutenant Colonel, USAR and Robert W. Robb, Colonel, USAR, Front-Line Intelligence (Washington, D.C.: Infantry Journal Press, 1946), 18; Edwin E. Schwein, Colonel, USA, Combat Intelligence: Its Acquisition and Transmission (Washington, D.C.: Infantry Journal Press, 1936), 1.

<sup>60</sup>A.C. Bevilacqua, Major, USMC, "Combat Intelligence in a Maneuver Environment," Marine Corps Gazette 69 (July 1985): 61.



ship is a harmonious one. Together, the S-2 and S-3 can ease the burdens of command considerably and significantly influence the combat effectiveness of the command as a whole. In spite of the fact that intelligence and operations officers labor toward the same end, their respective relationships with the commander are different. Although not the focus of this study, the operations officer is in a position to influence the relationship between commander and intelligence officer; it is therefore important to understand the nature of his relationship with the commander.

Commanders and operations officers virtually always enjoy a close relationship, and the bond forms naturally. This is due in large part to the duties of the S-3, and also to his personal and professional similarities with the commander. In peacetime, the operations officer coordinates all activities that relate to training, planning for exercises and contingencies, combat readiness reporting, and a host of other important matters that influence the command as a whole. In combat, he advises and assists the commander in evaluating the tactical situation, planning and supervising the tactical employment of units, and integrating supporting fires with maneuver; in short, virtually all of the functions that relate to accomplishing the mission involve the participation of the S-3. Under almost any circumstances, when issues of staff planning and coordination arise, the operations officer is



most often the focal point. In many cases, the commander-operations officer relationship resembles that between the commander and the First General Staff Officer (Ia) of the Prussian-German command system, where the Ia doubles as chief of staff and operations officer, and exercises controlling authority over the other staff sections.<sup>61</sup> The functions of the S-3 naturally make him a close adviser to the commander. They also share many personal and professional similarities.

Excluding the executive officer, the operations officer is usually the senior member of the staff in terms of grade; he is also close to the commander in terms of age. Both are infantry officers and probably have a similar pattern of previous assignments. For example, most commanders serve as operations officers at some point prior to command assignments. Bonds form more easily when there is a foundation of shared experience. Likewise, their long and short-term professional goals are similar.

Assignment as an S-3 is a major step in an officer's professional development and frequently leads to command, and command is what most officers aspire to achieve. The *sine qua non* for advancement in the Marine Corps is excellence in operational art. The best, if not the only way, to gain such experience is in operations and command assignments. In the

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<sup>61</sup>Martin van Creveld, Fighting Power: German and U.S. Army Performance, 1939-1945 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 47.

more immediate circumstances of planning and supervising the combat operations of the unit, the operations officer will, for the most part, be of one mind with the commander and fully support his plans and policies. The commander will more often than not consult the S-3 prior to making operational decisions. When the commander goes on reconnaissance, visits other units, or attends meetings, the S-3 frequently accompanies him; if not, he is supervising operations in the combat operations center (COC) during the commander's absence.

One seldom observes a commander-operations officer relationship that is less than satisfactory. From the beginning, the conditions exist for the formation of a close and harmonious relationship. Equally seldom does one observe a principal staff where the S-3 is not the dominant figure. Even on staffs where the grades of the principal members are equal, the duties of the operations officer and his close relationship to the commander elevate him to the status of *de facto* senior member. The S-3 is therefore in a position to influence the commander in many respects, including his relationship with the intelligence officer. Whether or not the influence is positive or negative is completely dependent upon the personalities and professional qualities of the participants, especially the commander.

## **E. SUMMARY**

Command is the exercise of authority over a military unit by a single officer--the commander. The commander has authority equal to his responsibility, and he is responsible for all the command does or fails to do. The commander delegates authority to members of the staff to advise and assist him in his command responsibilities. The nature of command and staff functions forms an inseparable link between command-inclusive of the operations officer-and intelligence. Intelligence attempts to reduce uncertainty and risk by determining unknown factors of three imponderables: the enemy situation, the terrain, and the weather, as they relate to the mission of the command. Intelligence is the means by which the commander can apply maximum combat power at the decisive time and place to achieve a decisive result; it is the driving force behind operational decisions of the commander. What does the record of the past indicate as to how well commanders fulfill their intelligence responsibilities? How well do commanders understand and participate in the intelligence process?

#### IV. A PERSONAL, INHERENT, FUNCTION OF COMMAND

We must constantly bear in mind the fact that the direction and supervision of intelligence service activity is a responsibility of the commander. It is part of his personal, inherent, command function.

Lieutenant Colonel Walter C. Sweeney, USA<sup>62</sup>

The commander must appreciate and shoulder his intelligence responsibilities or fail in the discharge of his operational functions.

Brigadier General James M. Masters Sr., USMC<sup>63</sup>

##### A. INTRODUCTION

The preceding section outlines the concepts of command responsibility and staff functions. Intelligence is a function of command; as are operations, logistics, and personnel. An intelligence officer serves on the principal staff in order to advise and assist the commander, however, the ultimate responsibility for success or failure of the intelligence effort is the commander's. Marine Corps intelligence doctrine states this point precisely: "The commander is responsible for all intelligence and counterintelligence

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<sup>62</sup>Walter C. Sweeney, Lieutenant Colonel, USA, Military Intelligence: A New Weapon in War (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1924), 27.

<sup>63</sup>James M. Masters Sr., Brigadier General, USMC, "Minimizing Uncertainty . . . The Three Headed Spook," Marine Corps Gazette 42 (June 1958): 22.

activities of the command."<sup>64</sup> It is only logical then to focus on the commander. Although doctrine provides detailed descriptions of the intelligence officer's duties and functions, it contains little discussion of the commander's responsibilities, other than the line above.

This section of the thesis examines the record of the past in addressing the following questions: How does the responsibility for intelligence translate into action? How well do commanders understand and participate in the intelligence process? A recurring theme is that of responsibility and authority. The intent of further examining these subjects is not to fix accountability for problems that occur; neither is it to discuss specific responsibilities within the context of the intelligence process. This author has no interest in the former, and the latter is the subject of examination elsewhere in the thesis. This section directs attention to the individual that has authority equal to his responsibilities, and is therefore in the best position to influence change--the commander.

#### **B. UNDERSTANDING INTELLIGENCE--THE RECORD OF THE PAST**

Commanders dissatisfied with intelligence are most often those who fail to directly participate in the process. They do not participate because they mis-understand intelligence

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<sup>64</sup>Commander's Guide, 2-3. Also MAGTF Intelligence, 7-4, 7-5.



and the command-intelligence relationship. This is not a problem unique to the Marine Corps; all services and civilian intelligence organizations experience the same problem to a greater or lesser degree. Neither is it an uncommon problem; Irving Heymount writes that, ". . . no other single factor [than combat intelligence] has been so consistently ignored and neglected by unsuccessful commanders." He adds that successful commanders universally stress its importance and use.<sup>65</sup> One would be hard-pressed to find a major or minor conflict in this century where there did not emerge a perception among many that intelligence is the least understood aspect of military operations. Post-war comments by various authors over the last seven decades clearly substantiate this argument.

A regimental intelligence officer in World War I, Lieutenant Colonel Sweeney writes after the war that, "no military activity is so shrouded in mystery as that of intelligence." He attributes the major cause of the problem to a lack of understanding of the command-intelligence relationship. In 1936, another veteran of the Great War, Colonel Edwin E. Schwein also describes the intelligence

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<sup>65</sup>Irving Heymount, Combat Intelligence in Modern Warfare (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Co., 1960), 1; quoted in Rodriguez Monograph, 4.

section of the staff as a "mystery to the average officer."<sup>66</sup> The formal staff structure of intelligence was new, generally mis-understood, and did not produce tangible, visible benefits during its post-war existence. Accordingly, there was little support forthcoming for intelligence during the late 1920's and 1930's, when national military preparedness was at one of the lowest points in our history. Writing in 1948, General Eisenhower points to the cause of many of the intelligence-related problems during World War II as directly attributable to the lack of support for intelligence by senior commanders between the wars.<sup>67</sup>

A group of combat commanders known as the Lovett Board was convened by the Secretary of War in 1945 to examine military intelligence operations during World War II. One of their conclusions states that, "There has been, at all levels, a lack of understanding of the proper function of intelligence."<sup>68</sup> Lieutenant Colonels Robert R. Glass and Phillip B.

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<sup>66</sup>Sweeney, v, 6; also Schwein, v.

<sup>67</sup>Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1948), 31-33; quoted in Stephen C. Conrad, Lieutenant Colonel, USA, "The History of Military Intelligence," study project for the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1989, 6.

<sup>68</sup>Finding of the Lovett Board, a group of combat commanders convened in 1945 by the Secretary of War to examine military intelligence operations during World War II; quoted in Douglas A. Campbell and Robert W. McKinney, Majors, USA, "Predictive Intelligence: An Old Lesson Unlearned," Military Review 70 (August 1990): 52.

Davidson hold the same view in their 1948 book, Intelligence is for Commanders: "Perhaps the major intelligence problem of the last war was that commanders were not "intelligence conscious." They relate how many German officers would frequently express contempt for intelligence, believing that their excellence in operational art would enable them to overcome any difficulties. By the time their experience on the Eastern Front had taught them differently, it was too late; the Germans had ignored operational and strategic-level intelligence for too long.<sup>69</sup> Ironically, Shipley Thomas identifies the same problem with the German Army during World War I. He describes how, during the long years of peace, combat intelligence had become the subject of neglect. "Theory, dogma, and schoolroom logic had become, as it usually does, the substitute for combat intelligence."<sup>70</sup>

Marine Captain A.B. Waters, writing after the Korean War, notes the same trend concerning lack of understanding, suspicion, and contempt towards intelligence.<sup>71</sup> The attitude shown on one occasion by a regimental commander illustrates

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<sup>69</sup>Robert R. Glass and Phillip B. Davidson, Lieutenant Colonels, USA, Intelligence is for Commanders (Harrisburg, PA: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1948), 39. Further discussion of the German experience with intelligence during World War II can also be found in Handel, Intelligence and Military Operations, 22-24.

<sup>70</sup>Thomas, 4-6.

<sup>71</sup>A.B. Waters, Captain, USMC, "The Price of Intelligence," Marine Corps Gazette 38 (July 1954): 41.

this point. The commanding officer of 1st Marines in Korea, Colonel Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, was then, and is still a legend in the Marine Corps. In an intelligence briefing prior to the high-risk amphibious assault at Inchon, he impatiently cut his S-2 off and said in part, "We'll find out what's on the beach when we get there."<sup>72</sup> He made the remark in order to imbue a sense of confidence in his officers and to diminish what he describes as, "too much goddamned pessimism" in the regiment. Although Colonel Puller was properly exerting his leadership, a similar attitude under different circumstances could lead to unnecessary casualties, or even defeat. In 1955, Army Colonel Elias Carter Townsend describes the intelligence system as the subject of frequent "disparagement and ridicule." Additionally, he states that commanders were not always appreciative of the capabilities and limitations of intelligence, neither did they understand the relationship of intelligence to command.<sup>73</sup>

In 1957, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Randolph McC. Pate, directed that all general officers place

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<sup>72</sup>Robert Debs Heinl, Jr., Colonel, USMC (Ret), Victory at High Tide: The Inchon-Seoul Campaign (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1968), 77. Heinl cites an interview with Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, USMC (Ret) who was in attendance. General Simmons is now the Director of Marine Corps History and Museums.

<sup>73</sup>Elias Carter Townsend, Risks: The Key to Combat Intelligence (Harrisburg, PA: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1955), 2.

the improvement of intelligence high on their list of priorities. The following year, the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence at Headquarters Marine Corps published an article reinforcing the Commandant's remarks. The article reflects a balanced appreciation of the command-intelligence relationship, and strikes home on the role of the commander. **"A commander . . . must appreciate and shoulder his intelligence responsibilities or fail in the effective discharge of his operational functions."** General Masters recognizes the tendency to overlook intelligence requirements in the Marine Corps. He states that although the Marine Corps acknowledges the importance of intelligence, such "lip service" is inadequate. He cites an anonymous general officer as attributing the primary problem to the inertia surrounding intelligence. General Masters diminishes the impact of his own argument in the following paragraph, however, by indicating what he believes to be the salient feature of the Commandant's remarks the year before: the careful selection of intelligence officers. This may lead the reader to think that the most important task of the commander in fulfilling his intelligence responsibilities is the selection of an exceptional officer as the S-2.<sup>74</sup> The following year--1959--Brigadier General

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<sup>74</sup>Masters, 22. Masters commanded both 8th Marines and 4th Marines during his career, and also served as the G-2 of 1st Marine Division.



Cushman writes about closing the gap between intelligence and operational doctrine. Attributing the first cause of the gap to "the greater interest in tactics of many commanders," he applauds the contributions of countless Marines to new operational concepts and doctrine. Simultaneously, he laments the absence of officers who can boast of being operational intelligence experts.<sup>75</sup>

Major General McChristian, the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) J-2 in from 1965-1967, saw the same problem manifest itself in a different manner. "Commanders and staff officers who ask for more information than they need not only delay the receipt of what they need, but frequently cannot use what they receive."<sup>76</sup> In other words, non-specific, all-encompassing requests for information divert intelligence personnel and systems from working on the essential requirements of the commander; thus, the intelligence product is often of no use because it does not answer those essential requirements, or is altogether irrelevant.

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<sup>75</sup>R.E. Cushman, Jr., Brigadier General, USMC, "Closing the Gap," Marine Corps Gazette 43 (July 1959): 50. Cushman was serving as the Vice President's Assistant for National Security Affairs at the time he wrote the article. He later became Commandant of the Marine Corps.

<sup>76</sup>Joseph A. McChristian, Major General, USA, Vietnam Studies: The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965-1967 (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1974), 7.

In the aftermath of Operation DESERT STORM, much is being written about intelligence in the Marine Corps Gazette, Proceedings, and other professional journals. Typical of the opinion many intelligence officers share are the remarks of Marine Major C.E. Colvard. In an article in the Marine Corps Gazette, he state that, "Many of the operators [sic] are unaccustomed to interacting with their intelligence staff and display an alarming lack of knowledge concerning intelligence assets, techniques, capabilities, and limitations."<sup>77</sup> A research paper by members of the Marine Corps Battlefield Assessment Team in Southwest Asia also cites similar remarks after Operation DESERT STORM. Major Colvard's opinion is broadly-shared by intelligence officers, and even some commanders. For example, the report describes one battalion commander wondering why officers were always asking the S-2 what his plan was for handling enemy prisoners of war (EPW); Command and Staff Action assigns that function to the S-1.<sup>78</sup> Intelligence officers normally give instruction in basic EPW handling--search, secure, silence, safeguard, and speed to the

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<sup>77</sup>C.E. Colvard, Major, USMC, "Unfortunately, We Fought Like We Trained," Marine Corps Gazette 75 (September 1991): 20.

<sup>78</sup>F.D. Houston and P.J. Nagy, Majors, USMC, Intelligence Operations in Southwest Asia (Quantico, VA: The Marine Corps Research Center, 1991), 10, Research Paper No. 92-0008 (Part No.1). The opinions and conclusions of the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the view of the Marine Corps Research Center or any other governmental agency.

rear--as part of Law of Land Warfare training and to ensure the EPW are not "spoiled" prior to interrogation. However, the larger task of attending to their collective security, administrative, and logistical needs is an S-1 function. It is easy to be critical of individuals unfamiliar with staff functions and duties by concluding they do not thoroughly study their profession, and to a certain extent that is true. Ultimately, however, the commander is responsible for educating and training his staff. The larger problem of understanding and participation by commanders in the intelligence process continues, but the Marine Corps does little to correct the problem. The revered status of the commander, particularly commanding generals, discourages constructive criticism from external sources, and it is the nature of most humans to not be self-critical; at least not publicly. Some speak out in the Marine Corps, but they tend be lower ranking officers.

More recently, intelligence was a major focus of General A.M. Gray, Commandant from 1987-1991. He did much to try and improve intelligence in the Marine Corps, but old habits die hard, and there was little measurable progress. After retiring in 1990, a Director of Intelligence for General Gray, Brigadier General Breth, echoes General Masters' 30 year-old comment relating to the inadequacy of simply acknowledging the importance of intelligence, indicating the continuing gap between "lip service" and action. "It is very important that

we integrate real and not just *pro forma* intelligence into our doctrine, training, systems acquisition, and operational planning."<sup>79</sup> The general stops short of saying that commanders are not only *responsible* for reaching that goal, only they possess the *authority* to implement change. General Gray's efforts to instill the idea that "intelligence drives operations" was easy enough to accept, but insufficient in overcoming the intellectual inertia that grips many in the Marine Corps when it comes to putting the idea into practice.

The inability of the Marine Corps to change beliefs and practices dealing with intelligence continues today. Since August of 1990, the Marine Corps Gazette has featured numerous articles and letters relating to intelligence in general, and Operation DESERT STORM in particular.<sup>80</sup> If one measures the gap between commanders and intelligence officers by what is found in print, it is growing wider instead of closing. The debate is sharp, and in some cases, contains a bitter tone. For example, in an interview with Naval Institute Proceedings, one general officer writes, "I think it [intelligence] was terrible, absolutely terrible. . . . and that's just uncon-

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<sup>79</sup>Frank Breth, Brigadier General, USMC (Ret), "C<sup>4</sup>I<sup>2</sup>: Integrating Critical Warfighting Elements," Marine Corps Gazette 74 (March 1990): 48.

<sup>80</sup>See Marine Corps Gazette, August 1990; February, March, June, September, December 1991; March 1992.

scionable, as far as I'm concerned."<sup>81</sup> One can suggest that the same statement applied to the combat performance of a commander--especially if the commander felt the remark unjustified--would certainly provoke a sharp response from the intended recipient. The divisiveness such comments provoke is evident in the defensive tone of the rebuttals which intelligence officers submit for publication. Additionally, virtually all make the same observation--that commanders and other officers often do not understand nor participate in the intelligence process. The very fact that a debate exists over the responsibilities of command and the functions of intelligence indicates a lack of understanding and command participation in the intelligence process. One operations officer concludes in his article, "Years of gaffing off [neglecting] the intelligence field except when the shooting is about to start has given us the system we have today."<sup>82</sup>

### C. PERSONAL ACTION IS REQUIRED

Intelligence staffs and high-technology intelligence activities developed in the 20th Century. Prior to this

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<sup>81</sup>J.I. Hopkins, Major General, USMC, "This Was No Drill," Naval Institute Proceedings, 117, (November 1991): 58.

<sup>82</sup>C.L. Armstrong, Lieutenant Colonel, USMC (Ret), "Surviving the Storm: Will We Learn the Right Lessons from the Gulf War," Marine Corps Gazette 76 (March 1992): 41. Colonel Armstrong participated in Operation DESERT STORM, retiring shortly after his return.



century, commanders were, for all intents and purposes, their own intelligence officers. The nature of intelligence activities was primarily that of exploiting information from such sources as spies, prisoners, deserters, cavalry scouts, and captured documents. Commanders would personally direct collection activities; receive the information directly from the source; perform the analysis themselves, or in consultation with their senior commanders; and disseminate the intelligence, usually in conjunction with combat orders.<sup>83</sup> There was no question as to who was responsible for intelligence. There were no "intelligence failures" in those days; there were only commanders who did or did not use intelligence well. The two functions were inseparable. Intelligence failures are unique to the 20th Century, coincident with the rapid growth of intelligence organizations and capabilities.

A formal staff structure for intelligence in the U.S. military came about during World War I; at the same time there were major technical breakthroughs in intelligence. General Pershing, adopting the staff organization of the French and British, made the decision to add intelligence sections to

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<sup>83</sup>Recommended readings include: Conrad, Rodriguez, and Victor M. Rosello, Jr., Major, USA, "The Origins of Operational Intelligence," study project for the School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KA, 1989.

military staffs at all levels.<sup>84</sup> Although wire-tapping of telegraph lines was in practice for some time before World War I, the expansion of communications technology gave rise to signals intelligence and to more rapid dissemination of information. Additionally, the widespread use of aircraft led to the development of an aerial photography capability. The means available to the commander for the collection of information were growing, and so was the need for a staff officer to assist the commander in the performance of his intelligence responsibilities. How did these developments affect the requirement for the commander's participation in the intelligence process, if at all? Post-war comments from 1918 to 1991 provide an answer.

Among the earliest books on the subject of military intelligence appeared after World War I. The author, Lieutenant Colonel Walter Sweeney, describes the commander's responsibility for intelligence as that of collecting and evaluating information of the enemy and disseminating it in the form of intelligence to higher, lower, and adjacent headquarters. Although the intelligence officer and his personnel assist him in the discharge of those duties, direction and supervision of their efforts is the responsibility of the commander. "It is

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<sup>84</sup>Conrad, 4.

a part of his personal, inherent, command function.<sup>85</sup>

Authors writing about combat experiences during World War II reflect the same view. Lieutenant Colonels Glass and Davidson state it one sentence: "The final responsibility for securing the information and intelligence which he must have in a particular situation, and upon which he must base decisions that will enable him to accomplish the mission regardless of what an actual or possible enemy may do, rests upon the commander."<sup>86</sup> Comments from the intelligence officer for the MACV joint staff are similar: ". . . given that the intelligence officer has done everything in his power to obtain the facts, the commander must either become personally involved in the effort to obtain the information, or if a decision is required, accept the uncertainty in the lack of information as part of the nature of war."<sup>87</sup> Also from the Vietnam experience, a Marine intelligence officer writes, "If the commander personally participates in the intelligence process, reaction is assured and positive. . . . Successful results are immediate."<sup>88</sup> Finally, from Operation DESERT STORM: "Commanders that were involved in the intelligence process seemed to have

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<sup>85</sup>Sweeney, 27.

<sup>86</sup>Glass and Davidson, 66.

<sup>87</sup>McChristian, 8.

<sup>88</sup>R.B. MacKenzie, Captain, USMC, "Intelligence Starts at the Top," Marine Corps Gazette 57 (July 1973): 40.

a greater appreciation of intelligence capabilities and made satisfactory use of intelligence **even when that support was limited.**"<sup>89</sup>(emphasis added) These examples reveal few changes in the commander's role, and illuminate the vital component of a successful intelligence effort--the direct participation of the commander.

The authors cited by no means advocate that the commander personally perform the duties of the intelligence officer; they state the inherent responsibility for the commander to take whatever *personal action* circumstances require in order to obtain the intelligence he needs. Personal action means applying the necessary degree of authority and influence the commander holds by virtue of his office to the accomplishment of the intelligence mission. It does not include demonstrating "awareness" of a problem; devoting "attention" to it; expressing "concern" over the possible consequences; or making demands for results. It means--when the intelligence officer is unable to influence others; when he lacks the physical means necessary to assist the commander; or when the task is beyond his capabilities or experience--the commander must be willing and able to personally influence the action. What are practical examples of these circumstances?

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<sup>89</sup>Houston and Nagy, 10.

The above discussion on command and staff functions points out that staff officers act only in the name of the commander; they possess no inherent authority over other principal staff officers, subordinate units of the command, or officers on other staffs. Their ability to influence events is therefore solely dependent upon the extent of the authority and support they receive by extension from the commander. Without authority from the commander, a staff officer must rely on the power of his personality to persuade other staff officers into performing the tasks he deems essential to the intelligence mission of the command. For example, the regimental S-2 observes poor light and noise discipline practices by a battalion he visits in the field. The enemy's reconnaissance capability is substantial; units that are not careful about concealing lights at night, or make excessive noise in conducting routine activities are more vulnerable to detection by the enemy. Part of the S-2's counterintelligence duties are to neutralize enemy reconnaissance capabilities, so it is within the scope of his duties to bring the matter to the attention of the battalion intelligence officer. He does so, but subsequent visits and repeated discussions with the battalion S-2 yield no improvement in the battalion. The extent of his influence exhausted, it is the regimental intelligence officer's duty to bring the matter to the attention of his commander and urge that he do the same with



the battalion commander. The influence of the commander is also important in obtaining intelligence support from outside the command.

The mission, the nature of the enemy force, and the characteristics of the area of operations determine the type of intelligence collection units or systems required to obtain the necessary information. For example, a regimental S-2 believes that in the current tactical situation, the direct support of a company from the division's reconnaissance battalion will be critical to the regiment's ability to collect information. He discusses the issue with the regimental S-3, who has staff cognizance over matters pertaining to supporting units. The S-3 agrees that the reconnaissance company is critical to the mission. Both attempt to convince their counterparts on the division staff--the division G-2 and G-3--and are unsuccessful. The regimental intelligence and operations officers must now bring the matter to their commander. If he also recognizes the need for the reconnaissance company as being critical, it is his responsibility to convince the division commander. The influence of his staff officers to obtain the means necessary to accomplish the intelligence mission is not enough in this case; it requires personal action on his part. This is also true when the commander finds his intelligence officer lacking the experience necessary to function as effectively as he should; the

commander must take a personal part in the professional development of the officer.

Intelligence officers frequently serve as principal staff officers for the first time in what is also their first intelligence assignment. For example, second lieutenants directly from The Basic School and the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Basic Intelligence Officer's Course occasionally receive initial assignments as battalion S-2s; several such officers found themselves in combat during Operation DESERT STORM within months of assuming their new duties. The practice of assigning a second lieutenant as a battalion S-2 in order to "break him in" occurs frequently enough that the absurdity of it is often overlooked. A corollary would be the assignment of a second lieutenant right out of The Basic School and the Infantry Officers Course--about seven months training--as the operations officer of an infantry battalion; it is unthinkable. The same situation often occurs for first lieutenants and captains who change specialties, or "lateral move" to intelligence; they may not have had previous experience on a staff, in addition to this being their first assignment as an intelligence officer. Their performance under such circumstances will vary with individual ability, but it is a safe assumption that all will require a greater or lesser degree of guidance, instruction, and assistance from the commander at some point. Such is the case with virtually

any subordinate, regardless of their grade, assignment, or experience level.

Whatever the reason, lack of experience in an S-2 is a situation that the commander can correct under all but the most urgent circumstances. Furthermore, it is his duty to personally take part in doing so. The combat doctrine of the Marine Corps--FMFM 1: Warfighting--states, "*Commanders should see the development of their subordinates as a direct reflection on themselves.*"<sup>90</sup> (emphasis in original) It serves no useful purpose--neither is it fair to the command as a whole or the officer in question--to simply demand better performance from an inexperienced S-2, without also providing him the opportunity and support necessary for professional growth. The commander may provide guidance and assistance personally, arrange it through an acknowledged expert, or ensure that the knowledge and experience of the officer develop through additional training and education; how he does it is immaterial. It is a leadership responsibility he must fulfill to the limit of his abilities and resources.

If the problem is systemic, commanders must individually or collectively exercise their inherent power and influence to implement change. The root cause of the problem may be inadequate doctrine, dysfunctional organization or procedures,

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<sup>90</sup>Warfighting, 51.

or personnel assignment policies; it may also be shortcomings in realistic unit training exercises, or the nature of basic intelligence training. Whatever the problem is, commanders must be the force behind the solution; intelligence officers lack the authority and influence to do so themselves. Intelligence officers may draft doctrine; recommend tables of organization and operating procedures for intelligence units; and provide significant advice on the intelligence aspects of unit exercises and training; however, a commander must approve all of these actions. Any large organization such as the Marine Corps may be somewhat slow in implementing change; however, when commanders clearly articulate a requirement essential to combat effectiveness, then relentlessly pursue their goal, change takes place more rapidly. Without the power and influence of commanders driving it, change never occurs.

#### **D. SUMMARY**

The most fundamental principle relating to the responsibility for intelligence is that the commander view it as a "personal, inherent command function." Intellectual acceptance of that concept is essential to overcoming obstacles of any nature that impede the acquisition of intelligence the command requires, and is the major step toward a harmonious and effective command-intelligence relationship. The record of

the past indicates that commanders frequently do not take that view, therefore they do not understand, nor do they participate in the intelligence process; dissatisfaction, and perhaps unsuccessful operations are often the result. Fundamental to understanding their responsibility for intelligence is the realization that only they possess the authority to implement change. There will be occasions where, due to his status as a staff officer, his professional abilities, or the nature of his personality, the influence of the intelligence officer will be inadequate to the task. The commander must be capable of recognizing those occasions--or heeding the call for help from his S-2--and personally taking action as circumstances dictate. He cannot share responsibility for success or failure; it is his alone.

By comparison to the observations of authors in the opening paragraphs of this section, the *pro forma* statement appearing in current doctrine--"The commander is responsible for all intelligence and counterintelligence activities of the command"--appears passive and distant. There is no direct call for personal action or participation of the commander in the intelligence process. Those that will argue that none is needed--that the implication in that single statement is not only clear, but sufficient--argue against the record of the past. Are there indications that doctrine reinforces these practices?



## V. THE INFLUENCE OF DOCTRINE

The G-2/S-2 is the **sole** architect of all facets of the intelligence effort. (emphasis added)

Fleet Marine Force Manual 3-20:  
Commander's Guide to Intelligence  
1991<sup>91</sup>

### A. INTRODUCTION

Doctrine is general guidance that establishes a particular way of thinking about how a military organization will fight a war; its purpose is to provide a basis for mutual understanding among the members of the organization and a foundation for harmonious actions during war. Although it is authoritative, it is not prescriptive; doctrine requires judgment in application.<sup>92</sup> In his book Command, Control, and the Common Defense, C. Kenneth Allard uses the term doctrine in the context of a services' "historical reactions to roles and missions . . ."<sup>93</sup> In view of discussion so far in this study, it is an especially fitting interpretation. Although the application of doctrine may be uneven in practice, its

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<sup>91</sup>Commander's Guide, 2-6.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>93</sup>C. Kenneth Allard, Lieutenant Colonel, USA, Command, Control, and the Common Defense (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 228.

importance cannot be underestimated; the substance of doctrine is the basis of instruction in professional schools; for many, that experience forms a lasting impression.

This section of the thesis examines doctrine in order to determine its influence on commanders understanding of, and participation in the intelligence process. Does doctrine reinforce the concept of intelligence as a "personal, inherent function of command?" Does it encourage the commander's participation in the intelligence process? Furthermore, are there indications that the phrasing of doctrine can have the effect of shifting the tacit, or inferred, responsibility from the commander to the intelligence officer? If so, what manifestations of that occurrence support that view?

Fleet Marine Force Manual (FMFM) 3-21: Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Intelligence Operations describes intelligence doctrine in the Marine Corps. It contains detailed descriptions of intelligence organizations, procedures, capabilities, and limitations. Another manual, FMFM 3-20: Commander's Guide to Intelligence, condenses MAGTF Intelligence, providing commanders an overview of essential material. The documents mirror each other in form and substance, but there is considerable difference in the degree of emphasis on the responsibilities of the commander; for some reason, MAGTF Intelligence is more specific than Commander's Guide in this regard. Commander's Guide, because of its title and brevity,

is more likely to be read by commanders, however, and is therefore the focus of discussion.

#### B. NO CALL FOR PERSONAL ACTION

The first paragraph in any document is critical to the reader's perception of the entire work; it often makes the difference between the reader continuing or setting it aside. It provides the spirit of the document. The introductory paragraph in Commander's Guide (and in MAGTF Intelligence) states in part, "Success of the intelligence effort will depend upon command awareness and appreciation of intelligence as an element of combat power."<sup>94</sup> This statement is of utmost importance, yet it is incomplete and lacking in emphasis.

It is important because it identifies a primary, historical weakness of intelligence--lack of understanding on the part of commanders. It is incomplete because it is lacking a phrase that calls for the direct participation of the commander in the intelligence process; participation that is critical to success. It lacks emphasis because the phrase "command awareness" is ambiguous and subject to interpretation. Use of the word "command" in this context can mean the *commander*; the *command* as an organization; or both. "Awareness" to some can

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<sup>94</sup>Commander's Guide and MAGTF Intelligence, 1-1 in both documents.

mean familiarity with elementary concepts of a subject; to others it can imply a working knowledge which permits deeper understanding of more complex issues. Commander's Guide (but not MAGTF Intelligence) further diminishes the importance of the statement by making it a parenthetical remark. In addition to more effective phrasing--and based upon the record of past events as pertains to the level of understanding and participation of commander's in intelligence matters--such a statement deserves to stand alone, in large, bold print. One example could be the following:

**Success of the intelligence effort will depend upon the direct participation of the commander, his understanding of the capabilities and limitations of intelligence in reducing uncertainty and risk, and his appreciation of intelligence as an inseparable element of command and combat power.**

This revised statement immediately makes it clear that the commander's direct participation is essential to success. No less important is the requirement that the commander understand the practical limits of intelligence personnel, procedures, and systems in reducing uncertainty and risk. This prevents expectations from exceeding reality, and permits a more effective relationship with his intelligence officer. The last phrase establishes in the reader's mind that intelligence is an inseparable function of command and forms the basis for operational decision-making that results in decisive combat actions. As it stands now, in the opening paragraph of

the two documents officers will most likely refer to on the subject of intelligence, the commander's role in intelligence appears passive and distant. This theme runs consistently throughout the Commander's Guide.

The phrase, "The commander should be aware . . .," appears frequently in Commander's Guide, keeping the door open for ambiguity and misinterpretation. Like "awareness," use of the word "should" can imply a sense of probability, expectation, or conditionality, as well as a sense of duty or obligation. For example, the following sentence appears on page 2-2 in Commander's Guide: "The commander should be aware that certain conditions will directly influence the nature of intelligence operations." Omitting the phrase in question results in a statement that more effectively captures interest and encourages more thorough understanding: "Certain conditions will directly influence the nature of intelligence operations." In addition to not actively encouraging the commander's participation in the intelligence process, Commander's Guide provides little guidance as to his practical responsibilities. The manual provides a great deal of information about the intelligence officer's duties; it does not adequately answer the question, "What are the commander's responsibilities?"

A close reading of Commander's Guide reveals directive comments which delineate specific responsibilities of the



commander. Several sections contain statements which more or less accomplish that purpose; however, only two stand out. The first is found under "Intelligence Training," and states "Intelligence training is the responsibility of all commanders." Appropriately, it is the first sentence of the subparagraph entitled "Responsibility."<sup>95</sup> The other is under "Amphibious Operations." This chapter clearly lists the responsibilities of the Commander Landing Force; they virtually mirror image tasks the intelligence officer performs in assisting the commander, but the authors correctly cite them as responsibilities of the commander.<sup>96</sup> The authors of Commander's Guide diminish the importance of other specific references to responsibility by unobtrusive placement within the text; by statements immediately following which may cause the reader to relax his attention to the subject; by the absence of substantive, amplifying guidance; or by a combination of these conditions. Can the phrasing and wording of doctrine have the effect of shifting in the reader's mind the responsibility for intelligence from the commander to the intelligence officer?

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<sup>95</sup>Commander's Guide, 6-1.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., 5-3.

### C. TACIT RESPONSIBILITY SHIFTS

The authors of Commander's Guide appear reluctant or hesitant to directly confront the issue of responsibility. The first indication that the commander directs the intelligence effort is found on the fifth page of text in Commander's Guide, in an unlikely paragraph entitled "Intelligence Requirements."

Intelligence requirements are derived from the mission. Successful fulfillment of those requirements provides the commander with timely, integrated, all-source intelligence that enhances the accomplishment of the mission. The commander, through the G-2/S-2, directs the intelligence effort. Based on knowledge of the enemy, weather, and terrain, the G-2/S-2 develops intelligence requirements to support the commander's concept of operations.<sup>97</sup>

Thus, the important concept of the commander personally directing the intelligence effort is in an unobtrusive location in the text. The sentence is interrupted by a qualifying clause which diminishes the significance of the concept and dilutes the commander's inherent responsibility. The following sentence effectively diverts the tacit responsibility for the determination of intelligence requirements to the intelligence officer. There are three kinds of intelligence requirements; essential elements of information (EEI), other intelligence requirements (OIR), and basic requirements. The importance of the commander's participation in determining requirements--primarily EEI--is the subject of discussion in

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<sup>97</sup>Ibid., 2-1.

the final section of this thesis. Ideally, intelligence officers are proficient enough to determine what EEI are important to the mission, but even the best S-2s cannot always figure out what is important to the commander. Remember from the first section of this study that he sees the world in a light totally different than anyone else in the command; he must clearly state what is important to *him*. Finally, substantive guidance as to how the commander ("through the G-2/S-2") directs the intelligence effort is completely absent.

Another significant example is in a paragraph entitled "Considerations for Intelligence Operations." On balance, it contains useful advice for the commander. Primarily it discusses the uniqueness of intelligence work; that it deals with more unknown, variable quantities in an environment over which it has less control than any other staff section. Because of the inherently unpredictable nature of the enemy, uncertainty, and friction in war, it encourages commanders to create an environment in which the S-2 is not afraid to take risks in forecasting or predicting enemy activity.<sup>48</sup> The paragraph contains sound wisdom, to be sure; however, it too falls short of the mark. There is no practical guidance other than, "foster the unique environment in which **the intelligence officer must . . . complete the intelligence cycle.**", and to

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 2-6.

". . . realize that intelligence is an inexact science, and he [the commander] must accept some uncertainty."<sup>99</sup> There is no guidance that suggests how the commander might influence the intelligence effort through direct participation when, for example, the S-2 reaches the limit of his influence with others, his means, or his depth of experience. More importantly, it suggests that the intelligence officer completes the intelligence process alone and in a vacuum; there is no rejoinder that the ultimate responsibility for the synthesis of intelligence upon which he bases operational decisions is the commander's, and his alone. This reinforces the idea that the wording in doctrine is such that it shifts the tacit responsibility for the command function of intelligence to the intelligence officer.

Finally, the subparagraph following "Commander's Responsibilities" addresses those of the intelligence officer. It states in part, "The G-2/S-2 is the **sole** architect of all facets of the intelligence effort."<sup>100</sup> (emphasis added) This single statement can have the effect--perhaps more so than any other statement or subtleties in wording--of shifting the tacit responsibility for the command function of intelligence to the intelligence officer. This tendency manifests itself

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

in the comments and actions of commanders and other officers relating to intelligence.

#### D. MANIFESTATIONS OF THE TACIT SHIFT

There are a surprising number of officers in the Marine Corps today who believe that the problems associated with intelligence are problems for intelligence officers to solve alone. A general officer addressing the Class of 1991 at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College in the spring of that year was highly critical of intelligence during Operation DESERT STORM. At the conclusion of his remarks he said, "You intelligence officers out there have a lot of work to do."<sup>101</sup> Another general officer--an aviator--speaking to the Amphibious Warfare School, Class of 1988, was questioned as to how the Marine Corps would fill the gap in tactical aerial imagery when the only squadron capable of performing the mission--VMFP-3, flying RF-4B reconnaissance Phantoms--was to be deactivated prior to the acquisition of a replacement system. His curt response was that it is a problem for "you intelligence guys to figure out."<sup>102</sup> An officer who served as a regimental S-2 in Southwest Asia states, ". . . the intelligence community as a whole needs to look in the mirror and see itself honestly, looking to itself for solutions rather than

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<sup>101</sup>Interview with an officer student who was in attendance.

<sup>102</sup>Personal experience of the author.



blaming the mirror, and those who bought it, for the defective image it reflects."<sup>103</sup> A retired colonel writes in part, "One hopes that the intelligence community would devote as much attention to where it has gone wrong as it devotes to passing off the blame."<sup>104</sup> These statements are surprising in view of the fact that intelligence officers have no inherent authority. Additionally, if one accepts that intelligence is a function of command and therefore the responsibility of the commander, these statements equate to criticism of commanders and their failure to "appreciate and shoulder their intelligence responsibilities." Finally, they are indicative of the divisiveness present in the command-intelligence relationship today. What other practices might lead one to believe that the tacit responsibility for intelligence often shifts to intelligence officers?

In the early summer of 1991, an intelligence conference sponsored by Headquarters Marine Corps convened in Quantico, Virginia to identify problems with intelligence during Operation DESERT STORM. The message announcing the conference encouraged the attendance of commanders and operations officers in order to obtain their perspective of events. One

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<sup>103</sup>R. Scott Moore, Major, USMC, "Self-inflicted Wounds," letter to the editor, Marine Corps Gazette 76 (March 1992): 21.

<sup>104</sup>J.J. Edson, Colonel, USMC, "A Look At What's Really Wrong," letter to the editor, Marine Corps Gazette 76 (March 1992): 20.

regimental commander--from the 1st Marine Division in California--set time aside to attend the conference.<sup>105</sup> No other commanders or operations officers attended. A conclusion one could naturally draw from this is that for all of the criticism levied on the intelligence effort during Operation DESERT STORM, and in spite of encouragement from Headquarters Marine Corps, only one commander deemed the conference important enough to warrant his attendance.

Finally, there is often a competitive, rather than a cooperative relationship between many commanders and their intelligence officers. This symptom manifests itself most readily in the after-action analysis of intelligence "forecasts," or "predictions." How close was the S-2 in his prediction to what actually took place on the battlefield? Such critiques overlook two fundamental facts. First, it is impossible for *anyone* to predict events on the battlefield accurately and consistently; theories of war from Clausewitz to Warfighting recognize this fact. Yet, the practice persists of evaluating intelligence officers based on their ability to accomplish that which is impossible. There is no faster way to lose the loyalty and respect of an earnest subordinate than to expect the impossible from him, provide no

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<sup>105</sup>Interview with the commander who attended, Colonel J.A. Fulks. Colonel Fulks commanded 4th Marines during Operation DESERT STORM.

guidance or support, then lay the blame for failing to attain that goal on his shoulders. Such cases are leadership failures of the highest order.

Second, it is the commander who performs the final synthesis of intelligence upon which he makes decisions. It is his prerogative to accept in whole, in part, or completely reject the conclusions of the S-2. Once he makes his decision, however, the intelligence estimate of enemy capabilities becomes his, and not the intelligence officer's. Marine Lieutenant Colonel Morosoff, a former artillery battalion commander, agrees. "If a commander fails to take the necessary precautions against an attack and is surprised because his intelligence officer said the enemy would delay, not attack, the commander, not the intelligence officer, is responsible."<sup>106</sup> According to Army Majors Campbell and McKinney, virtually all of the 48 generals who participated in a 1948 study--many with combat command during World War II--also agree. Lieutenant General Manton S. Eddy, the commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College that year, sent out questionnaires soliciting comments as to how these commanders and their intelligence officers evaluate the enemy situation. One of the respondents, General of the Army Omar N. Bradley, states that although the commander and G-2 may

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<sup>106</sup>Morosoff, 66-67.

differ, "It is still his [the commander's] responsibility to make proper decisions and he cannot blame his G-2 if that G-2 listed capabilities in the wrong order." Commander of the 90th Infantry Division and XIX Corps during the war, Lieutenant General Raymond S. McLain expresses his view in more fundamental and forceful terms: "Any commander who will be misled by erroneous conclusions is not capable of command anyway."<sup>107</sup>

The practice of analyzing intelligence estimates in hindsight, then providing stinging criticism because events turned out differently than "forecast," must cease. Such a practice ignores the impossibility of the task to begin with, then demonstrates a failure to accept responsibility for what is an inherent function of command. The result is a competitive, rather than a cooperative relationship between commander and intelligence officer; one that provokes divisiveness and is counter-productive to the teamwork so essential in combat. The preceding examples are representative of the more pervasive attitude held by many officers that the problems of a separate and distinct entity known as the "intelligence community" are problems for intelligence officers to solve. Doctrine merely reinforces current and past tendencies.

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<sup>107</sup>Campbell and McKinney, 57.

The introduction to this section states that doctrine forms the substance of instruction in professional schools. One measurement of the importance the Marine Corps attaches to a given subject could be the number of hours of instruction provided in professional schools. Shlomo Gazit, former Director of Military Intelligence for the Israeli Defense Force, states "The commander must learn, from the lowest level upward as he rises through the ranks, how to work in cooperation and direct liaison with intelligence." He continues by saying that, "The subject of intelligence and its related staff work should have an important place in every military school or course."<sup>108</sup> How well does the Marine Corps heed such sound wisdom? The initial training period for second lieutenants of five and one-half months at The Basic School includes two and one-half hours of intelligence instruction. It is the lowest amount of time afforded any of the major subject areas, and less than .2 percent of the total number of training hours. By comparison, personnel administration receives 17 hours, while military justice and legal matters receive 25 hours. Amphibious Warfare School is a nine-month school for captains. Not including threat briefings on specific countries, intelligence instruction amounts to

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<sup>108</sup>Shlomo Gazit, "Intelligence Estimates and the Decision-maker," in Leaders and Intelligence, ed. Michael I. Handel (London: Frank Cass & Company, Limited, 1989), 268.



approximately 17 hours, or about two percent of total training time. Command and Staff College, also a nine-month course, but for majors, includes instruction comparable in number of hours and percent of total instruction to Amphibious Warfare School; about two percent.<sup>109</sup> If the Marine Corps still believes that "intelligence drives operations," it does not reflect that belief in the amount of time devoted to the subject of intelligence in professional schools for officers.

#### **E. SUMMARY**

Doctrine as represented by the Commander's Guide does nothing to reinforce the concept of intelligence as "personal, inherent, function of command." The authors appear to be cautious in their wording and reluctant to drive the point of command responsibility home. Commander's Guide neither contributes to understanding nor encourages direct participation. There are further indications that subtleties of phrasing can have the effect of shifting the tacit responsibility to the intelligence officer. Comments and actions by many officers today support the view that intelligence is somehow distinct and separate from command; that problems in the field are for the "intelligence community" to solve alone. Such a view ignores fundamental facts relating to responsibil-

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<sup>109</sup>The curriculum offices of the respective schools provided this information.

ity and authority of the commander and further erodes the vital bond that must exist between commander and intelligence officer.

What doctrine says about the commander's responsibilities in the intelligence process lacks any substantive guidance as to how he can fulfill those duties. What modifications to doctrine will assist commanders in understanding and participating in the intelligence process, and in recognizing the importance of their clear and timely guidance?

## VI. CONTROLLING THE DIRECTION OF INTELLIGENCE

Information is the soul of morale in combat and the balancing force in successful tactics. Yet in an era of warfare which on the whole is extremely enlightened . . . we have not found the means to assure an abundant flow of that most vital of all combat commodities--information.

S.L.A. Marshall<sup>110</sup>

As usual, the common soldiers knew little about their situation . . .

Guy Sajer<sup>111</sup>

### A. INTRODUCTION

According to MAGTF Intelligence, the primary function of the commander in the intelligence process is "controlling the direction" of intelligence activities.<sup>112</sup> That said, MAGTF Intelligence then fails to define what that means; the reader is left to derive meaning from the text. It is, however, one step better than Commander's Guide, which does not contain the statement at all. Controlling the direction of intelligence means guiding its focus of effort in the intelligence cycle. Why is the commander's guidance so important? What is the intelligence cycle? As doctrine provides no specific assis-

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<sup>110</sup>Marshall, Men Against Fire, 92.

<sup>111</sup>Sajer, 226.

<sup>112</sup>MAGTF Intelligence, 7-5.

tance, what are examples of how the commander controls the direction of intelligence? In answering the last question, the thesis examines two phases of the intelligence cycle and related events during Operation DESERT STORM.

## **B. COMMANDER'S GUIDANCE IS CRITICAL**

Guidance from the commander is critical to the success of the intelligence effort for two principal reasons. First, no staff officer can always know what is important to the commander, nor should he be required to guess. The commander takes decisions in view of many factors; intelligence, friendly capabilities, pressure from senior commanders (who in turn may be under pressure from civilian authorities), responsibility for the mission and the welfare of his men, and even personal ambition. The intelligence officer does not feel these influences in the same way. The commander must communicate his concerns and intent in as much detail as time and circumstances permit. Lieutenant Colonel Morosoff, author of the Battlefield Assessment Team's report on command and control during Operation DESERT STORM, highlights this in his report and relates it specifically to intelligence. Warfighting, he says, recognizes the difficulty in explaining tasks to those who must accomplish them; direct communication improves mutual understanding of the task. He points out that "these passages are widely quoted, but usually thought of as pertain-

ing to conveying instructions to those who attack the enemy rather than to those who develop intelligence . . ." When those requesting specific intelligence products met directly with intelligence personnel to explain their requirements, successful results were the norm. He goes on to say that as intelligence becomes more centralized, the requirement for face-to-face communication will increase.<sup>113</sup> Shlomo Gazit adds that this communication is not one way; ". . . a process of response, interrogation, and correction is to be desired . . . a misunderstood question cannot provide the required answer."<sup>114</sup>

Second, relating specifically to intelligence, the commander who is familiar with and close to the problems of the intelligence officer can enjoy certain advantages his S-2 may not possess. Sherman Kent states that, "His [the commander's] near view of the broad aspects of the problem and his remoteness from the fogging detail and drudgery of intelligence work may be the very thing which permits him to arrive at a more accurate synthesis of what the truth is than that of

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<sup>113</sup>Peter Morosoff, Lieutenant Colonel, USMC, Marine Expeditionary Force Command and Control in Southwest Asia (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Research Center, 1991), 19, Research Paper #92-0005. The opinions and conclusions in the report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the view of the Marine Corps Research Center or any other governmental agency.

<sup>114</sup>Gazit, 268.



the intelligence officer."<sup>115</sup> This can be true in the search for a solution to any problem, not just that of analysis and synthesis of information. The commander's singular perspective of the problem stems from the responsibility of command; he must communicate that perspective to the subordinates who will execute his will. Also, his detachment from the details of staff work often permit him to see solutions more rapidly than others. Continual guidance from the commander is therefore essential.

Flexibility and creativity are especially important in providing guidance. It is relatively easy to entangle oneself in peacetime organizations, procedures, and habits; commanders must ensure this does not happen with intelligence. Within the bounds of common sense, the technical limitations of equipment, and the physical and professional capacities of the humans involved, there is no requirement to adhere to any set formula or prescription for success. Attempts to conform to peacetime practices when the mission and circumstances call for innovation and change will be less than effective, and probably dysfunctional. S.L.A. Marshall writes in Men Against Fire that, ". . . by a rough approximation: 60 percent of the art of command is the ability to anticipate; 40 per cent of the art of command is the ability to improvise; to reject the

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<sup>115</sup>Kent, 203.

preconceived idea that has been tested and proved wrong in the crucible of operations, and to rule by action instead of acting by rules."<sup>116</sup> Prior to suggesting ways in which the commander can guide the focus of effort, one should possess an understanding of the intelligence process.

### C. THE INTELLIGENCE CYCLE

The intelligence process, or "cycle," is not a rigid procedural checklist, blindly adhered to under all circumstances; it is simply a description of sequential events that must occur to produce intelligence. The intelligence cycle consists of five phases: direction, collection, processing, production, and dissemination. These phases are sequential for any given intelligence question, or requirement; however, it is a continuous process. The first phase is direction. Direction includes determining intelligence requirements; planning collection activities to answer those requirements; issuing orders and requests to organizations that are capable of collecting the information; and supervising the progress of collection activities. The second phase is collection; acquiring the information and delivering it to the requesting unit. Processing--the third phase--consists of preparing the information for conversion into intelligence: recording it; converting its form, if necessary; and collating it into

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<sup>116</sup>Marshall, Men Against Fire, 108.

groups of similar or related data. The fourth phase is production. Information becomes intelligence during this phase of the cycle. Production includes analyzing the information to isolate significant elements relating to the mission of the command; evaluating the information for its pertinence, reliability, and accuracy; and interpreting it to determine its significance and meaning. When this is complete, the data is no longer information, it is intelligence. The fifth and final phase--dissemination--consists of delivering intelligence that is pertinent to the receiving unit and in time for the unit to act upon it. The means of dissemination should afford a degree of security consistent with the ability of the enemy to intercept it, and with the sensitivity of the intelligence. The production of intelligence results in the issuance of combat orders; a new mission creates new intelligence requirements, and the process continues.

Avoiding the danger of becoming so specific as to be prescriptive, what are some examples of how commanders control the direction of intelligence activities throughout different phases of the intelligence cycle? A detailed discussion of each phase is not the intent of this discussion; additionally, much is already written about the collection, processing, and production of intelligence. The focus of the following discussion is on direction and dissemination. These are traditionally weak areas in terms of participation by command-

ers; they afford the greatest opportunity for his participation and influence to achieve a decisive effect.

#### D. GUIDING THE FOCUS OF EFFORT--DIRECTION PHASE

Perhaps the most important phase in terms of the commander's guidance, it is in this phase where the commander states his intelligence requirements and priorities in the form of essential elements of information (EEI). Essential elements of information are "critical items of information regarding the enemy and the environment needed by the commander by a particular time to make a logical decision . . ."<sup>117</sup> For example, an EEI during Operation DESERT STORM was to determine if the Iraqis would employ chemical weapons.

Iraqi employment of chemical weapons would significantly influence friendly operations. There was the potential for massive casualties; a tremendous loss of tempo in allied offensive operations while units underwent time-consuming decontamination procedures or bypassed contaminated areas; and political and higher-level military dilemmas relating to retaliation in kind, or more draconian responses. Consequently, determining the Iraqi capability to employ chemical weapons was an EEI. Critical components of that EEI were to determine how soon the Iraqis could exercise that capability and by what delivery means; missiles, aircraft, artillery, and

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<sup>117</sup>MAGTF Intelligence, 14-2.

mines were all possibilities. Indications and warning of impending attack permits units to adopt a higher degree of chemical defense readiness, thus reducing casualties. Knowing the means of delivery may permit a preemptive strike or enable more appropriate protective measures to be put into action.

Essential elements of information are the commander's priority intelligence requirements and define the intelligence mission of the command; EEI drive the intelligence effort. Although the intelligence officer frequently assists the commander in formulating EEI, the commander is the approving authority. Commanders must avoid the tendency to list every missing item of information as an EEI; if *need to know* becomes confused with *nice to know*, the collection effort weakens and diffuses by diverting scarce collection assets to non-essential tasks. Additionally, when a commander asks for everything instead of just that which is essential, he may get his wish and later find it is one he regrets. The following example illustrates this point.

The technical ability of our nation and its military to collect information is so impressive it appears to be exceeding human ability to process it into intelligence in time for it to be of use. A striking comparison exists between Third Army operations in Europe during World War II and I MEF in Operation DESERT STORM. December 1944 was a busy month for the Third Army message center and code room; elements of



Patton's Third Army were in the process of relieving the surrounded 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne. The message center processed a total of 7,007 incoming messages, and the code room decoded 2,278 incoming messages; total for the Third Army in the 31 days of December--9,285 incoming messages to all staff sections.<sup>118</sup> It should be noted that Third Army had under its control roughly three units the size of I MEF during Operation DESERT STORM. By comparison, the I MEF G-2 section alone was receiving approximately 3,000 messages a day during Operation DESERT STORM; during the ground offensive the number rose to 6,000 a day. According to the I MEF G-2, Colonel Lucy, "the magnitude of information, the message traffic, processed by the G-2 section on a daily basis I found, personally, to be staggering."<sup>119</sup> As a result of the tremendous increase in the ability to collect information, the processing, analysis, and synthesis of enormous amounts of information into intelligence is much more difficult, the main problem being that of separating the relevant from the irrelevant. Thus the reason for commanders to specific in their requests for information and the need to focus on *essential* elements of information.

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<sup>118</sup>Floyd J. Davis, Lieutenant Colonel, USA, "The Staff: Another Dimension of the Operational Level of War," study project for the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1988, 91.

<sup>119</sup>Houston and Nagy, 3.

The authors of Front-Line Intelligence, Lieutenant Colonel Chandler and Colonel Robb, describe a perfect example of clearly-stated commander's guidance in the direction phase of the intelligence cycle. During the stubborn German defense of Brest in World War II, a U.S. regimental commander gave his S-2 one EEI--locate every German machine gun and mortar on the regimental front. Within 24 hours, the S-2 was able to give the commander an aerial photograph mosaic depicting all known positions, and all likely positions reported inactive in the last 24 hours.<sup>120</sup>

Another example, at the most basic level, demonstrates the importance of commanders establishing priorities in the direction phase. This example also illustrates how the commander must consider intelligence requirements that are important to the entire command, not just to him in his role as commander. During Operation DESERT STORM, front-line Marines were constantly requesting color photos or drawings of Iraqi and allied uniforms and distinctive insignia. The ability to identify their enemy is a fundamental intelligence requirement for Marines. In this case, Marines also had to be able to distinguish between friendly Arabs and hostile Arabs. Repeated requests for the product by tactical level intelli-

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<sup>120</sup>Chandler and Robb, 56.

gence officers went unanswered.<sup>121</sup> It was no one's priority intelligence requirement at the higher levels. The inability to satisfy such a fundamental requirement for those who must execute the commander's will is a glaring demonstration of failing to establish priorities on intelligence requirements, a task only commanders perform.

The determination of intelligence requirements is a dynamic process; changing conditions of battle will dictate new requirements, often very quickly. Although the S-2 frequently anticipates many of the commander's questions, developments can take place without the S-2's knowledge. No matter how close in physical proximity and working relationship the commander is to his S-2, he can never assume the S-2 is thinking of the same intelligence requirements in the same priority as is he. He must tell the S-2, and further expect the process of "response, interrogation, and correction" in clarifying the requirement. If clear and timely guidance is lacking in the beginning, the intelligence product will often be incomplete, inaccurate, or late. Early guidance is especially critical in ensuring that the intelligence process has time to run its course and disseminate the intelligence in time for it to be of use. Many point to dissemination of

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<sup>121</sup>Personal experience of the author.

intelligence as a continuing problem and the cause of many intelligence "failures."

#### **E. GUIDING THE FOCUS OF EFFORT--DISSEMINATION**

The goal of dissemination is to provide pertinent intelligence in a timely and secure manner and in a form usable to the receiving unit. If any of these conditions are not met, then the entire effort will not be as successful or effective as it should, and may even be a complete waste. Two recurring problems in this area demand the commander's participation and influence. The first involves the physical means of dissemination, and the second concerns support to subordinate units. Both relate to priorities which the commander establishes.

There are numerous means available to disseminate intelligence, most of them involving electronic transmission; secure telephones, radios, satellite communications, computer networks, and digital imagery transmission devices are some examples. They transmit intelligence rapidly; by adding encryption devices they meet the criteria for security; and the intelligence product they transmit can be readily "tailored" so it is pertinent to the receiving unit. A major problem in electronic dissemination is that units closest to the fighting usually possess the most austere capability for receiving intelligence through that medium; voice radios are

about all one will see at the battalion or regimental level, especially in a fast moving tactical situation. This austere capability precludes the dissemination of lengthy messages, reports, documents, imagery, or maps by electronic means. Although Marine divisions and MEFs possess a more sophisticated and extensive capability for electronic intelligence dissemination, the requirement still exists for a means to deliver such items as bulky documents and large quantities of maps and imagery. Even those materials which lend themselves to electronic transmission are subject to interference from several imponderables. Technical equipment malfunctions, electronic warfare, over-loaded circuits, and battle-damage can all cause the delay or non-delivery of intelligence.

During Operation DESERT STORM, instances of delay and non-delivery of intelligence were the result of two factors: an over-reliance on electronic means of transmission and a subsequent lack of willingness to vigorously pursue other means, specifically a responsive courier system. More than adequate resources were available to provide outstanding courier service; the will to devote them to the task was not. There exists the requirement, at all times and places, to have couriers physically deliver intelligence products. What does it take to establish such a system?

Courier systems must meet two of the criteria of proper dissemination: timeliness and security (usability of form and



pertinence are functions of the intelligence personnel who prepare the product, not the courier system). A courier systems requires the scheduled and non-scheduled use of ground vehicles and aircraft to deliver (and pick up) things from dispersed units. Courier systems are not for exclusive use by intelligence, but can be, if the commander desires. Scheduled "runs"--daily, for example--are appropriate for routine, recurring deliveries. Non-scheduled courier runs are essential for matters of a time-sensitive nature. Non-scheduled runs require the vehicle or aircraft and its operators must be standing ready for immediate use and not subject to diversion for other tasks, if they are to be truly responsive and effective. Ground couriers are appropriate when time is not critical, or when air transportation is unavailable. Air couriers are best for situations when time is a factor, the terrain is unsuited to rapid ground transport, and there is wide dispersion between units. The size and weight of the product to be delivered is a factor in choosing the mode of transportation, as are such other influences as the weather, the intervening terrain, and the enemy situation. An effective courier system will provide for all contingencies so that delivery of products large and small, priority and routine, can take place. Although they are relatively secure, courier systems cannot match the speed of electronic transmission.

Nevertheless, well-thought out courier systems are good enough in many circumstances.

Consider a command that produces a high-priority intelligence product normally suitable for electronic dissemination; the equipment necessary to do so is unavailable for use due to one or more of the possible reasons listed above. In the time it may take to repair or replace the necessary equipment; wait for enemy jamming to cease; or hope a radio net becomes available, a courier might be able to make the delivery. The attempt should take place in any event, in case there are unforeseen difficulties which prevent use of the transmission equipment. There is no avoiding the fact the a courier system such as the one described above can require the commitment of a considerable amount of vehicles, aircraft, and personnel to implement; it is primarily dependent upon the commander's willingness to devote the necessary assets so that he can provide intelligence to subordinates under virtually any circumstances. It requires not only that he make the decision to do so, but that he ensure its implementation. Intelligence officers cannot accomplish it effectively on their own.

Disseminating intelligence actually crosses several boundaries of staff functions; the S-2 must ensure dissemination occurs; the S-1 has the task of establishing a courier system; the S-3 has working for him the regimental air officer who requests aircraft; the S-4 and motor transport officer

control many of the available vehicles; and the communications officer establishes the electronic means of dissemination--radios, facsimiles, computers, etc.--he also controls the regimental motorcycles.<sup>122</sup> Commitment of any of the personnel or equipment necessary for dissemination of intelligence does not occur without clear direction from the commander as to the allocation of those resources. Establishing radio nets often occurs as a function of standard operating procedures, but implementing a courier system requires the approval of the commander simply because it is so resource intensive. The thought that drives the commander's will must be that of a relentless effort to provide intelligence to *all* of his subordinates, down to the lowest level possible. This is the second major problem area in dissemination.

Timely and accurate reporting up the chain of command always receives a great deal of emphasis. The same is not the case for dissemination of intelligence down the chain. This is the dual responsibility of dissemination. Some of the difficulties inherent in the task have already been discussed, but it is further compounded by a complication of human nature. Once commanders satisfy their personal need for knowledge, it is left to the intelligence officer to dissemi-

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<sup>122</sup>In the author's regiment, the communications officer controlled the motorcycle couriers; this may not be a standard procedure in other units.

nate the intelligence to the rest of the command. Commanders will almost always impart new knowledge to their subordinate commanders; however, broad dissemination to the command as a whole is one of the intelligence officer's tasks. If this is not being done, subordinate commanders frequently do not complain; *they* know, so why take a chance on upsetting their commander by complaining about inadequate dissemination? Why is it so hard to accomplish broad dissemination of information?

New information will naturally generate new questions by commanders; the desire for information in combat is insatiable and the questions are continuous. The intelligence officer immediately begins work on answering these new, perhaps urgent requirements. As his first priority is always to the commander, the intelligence officer directs his focus of effort--time and resources--to satisfying these new requirements. His ability to simultaneously disseminate intelligence is dependent in large part upon his personal abilities and available resources; too often these are inadequate. In their desire to satisfy their personal thirst for knowledge, commanders often overlook the fact that intelligence officers will answer their needs first, even if it means forsaking other duties, however reluctantly. If there are additional problems such as personnel shortages or organizational deficiencies, they make this situation worse. The Central Command (CENTCOM) concept

of intelligence support established by the Commander-in-Chief, General Schwarzkopf, was to have the service component commanders provide reporting on specific areas of responsibility to the CENTCOM intelligence section (J-2), which consisted of 40 personnel. General Schwarzkopf required the section to maintain eight situation maps and provide three briefings a day. Although the section could adequately support General Schwarzkopf, it was unable to provide tactical intelligence to subordinate commands. Additionally, there was a CENTCOM prohibition on cross-border reconnaissance operations by tactical units. This prevented I MEF from obtaining tactical information with its own resources. The MEF G-2 operations officer states, "They became a consumer [of intelligence] instead of a producer."<sup>123</sup> General Schwarzkopf's concept had an influence further down the chain. The I MEF G-2 section had to satisfy CENTCOM's requirements and those of the I MEF commanding general. Additionally, they were working under the same handicap as the J-2 section; shortage of personnel--only 24. The section was split first to provide two watch sections, then split again in order to maintain a forward command post. Given the volume of information they were receiving--3,000-6,000 messages a day--it was a major effort just to keep the I MEF commander and the J-2 informed; dissemination to

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<sup>123</sup>Houston and Nagy, 4.



subordinate units suffered accordingly.<sup>124</sup> Information that went up the chain seldom came back down. This took place even before the ground offensive began, as the example below illustrates.

Deserters can provide a great deal of information relating to the strength and location of enemy forces and such less tangible factors as morale and willingness to fight. A Central Command (CENTCOM) prohibition on cross-border ground operations did not permit units manning border positions to obtain such information themselves through reconnaissance, so deserters were a valued source of information at tactical level. The tactical information they provide is generally considered to lose its value after 24-48 hours, thus there is also a sense of urgency at the higher levels in evacuating the deserters to the rear. The standard operating procedure established by CENTCOM was that Iraqi deserters crossing the border prior to the ground offensive would not undergo lengthy interrogation by units manning border positions; evacuation to the division, MEF, or joint interrogation facility was to take place as soon a hasty interrogation was complete and transportation could be arranged. Instituting a policy of rapid evacuation of deserters to higher headquarters is in itself not wrong; as long as the interrogation reports quickly filter

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<sup>124</sup>Ibid., 5.

back down the chain to front-line units. This did not occur, in spite of the volume of reports produced by the Joint Interrogation Facility;<sup>125</sup> the immediate information needs of higher commanders were satisfied, new requirements were generated, and time and resources were devoted to that effort, not to dissemination to tactical units. Pushing intelligence down the chain of command was not a priority set by the highest level of command, and the effects were felt at the lowest levels. "As usual, the common soldiers knew little of their own situation . . ."

#### **F. SUMMARY**

"Controlling the direction of intelligence" means guiding its focus of effort. The commander's guidance is critical, as only he brings together all of the factors that influence combat decision-making. Also, if he has a near view of the broad aspects of intelligence, he may be better able to arrive at solutions to a given problem than the intelligence officer, who is often too close to the problem. Flexibility and creativity are important characteristics of that guidance. Commander's guidance is critical to success of the intelligence cycle throughout each phase, especially the direction phase in determining requirements; and the dissemination phase

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<sup>125</sup>David P. Biega, Commander (select), USNR, letter to the editor, Naval Institute Proceedings, 118, (February 1992), 20-21.

in establishing the means for, and priorities of, dissemination.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

In general, human beings don't accept the unaccustomed. Change frightens and upsets them, and they will fight even to preserve situations they have always detested.

Captain Wesreidau, German Army<sup>126</sup>

Today, as always, the way to overcome all our difficulties in war, large or small, is to be found in the proper development of the military personalities of officers and men.

Major General von Freytag-Loringhoven<sup>127</sup>

### A. SUMMARY

Several factors of doctrine, organization, and personality contribute to many commanders' reluctance to accept the responsibility for intelligence as a personal, inherent, function of command.

First, there are unrealistic expectations of intelligence in terms of its ability to eliminate uncertainty. The nature of war creates an environment unmatched in its complexity. The influence of violence on human behavior and the complex interaction of opposing wills makes war an inherently unpredictable activity. The dominant characteristics of war--physical exertion, danger, uncertainty, and chance--combine to

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<sup>126</sup>Sajer, 217.

<sup>127</sup>von Freytag-Loringhoven, 94.

form the concept of friction; the force that resists all action. Uncertainty interacts continually with chance--unforeseen events which neither side can control. Chance reduces the accuracy and predictive value of information, often resulting in unreliable intelligence. Friction is an inevitable condition of war.

The military genius of the commander is part of the counter-force to friction. Genius consists of the intellectual capacity to see the essence of a situation, the creative capacity to devise a practical solution, and the determination to execute the act. Genius is not a substitute for intelligence. The intuition of the military genius cannot function without some appreciation of the battlefield situation; it is neither rash boldness, nor is it guesswork. The military genius is simply more adept at exploiting information, and more accepting of the uncertainties of war, than someone of lesser ability. Intelligence, whether the commander acquires it through personal reconnaissance or an intelligence service, is inseparable from genius. Theory applied in combat requires incredible strength and adaptability in the human instruments of application.

Second, there is less than a complete understanding of the dynamics of command responsibilities and staff functions, and the connection between command and intelligence. The responsibility of command cannot be shared; the commander is



ultimately responsible for all his command does or does not do. The commander may delegate authority to staff officers who assist him in carrying out his responsibilities; however, the commander prescribes the limits of that delegated authority, and the staff officer may not exceed those limits.

The intelligence officer on the staff assists the commander in reducing uncertainty to the maximum extent possible. He is the commander's principal adviser for the collection, analysis, and synthesis of information relating to three imponderables and how they affect the mission of the command; the enemy situation, the terrain, and the weather. Intelligence is the means which permits the commander to apply combat power at the decisive time and place to accomplish the mission at the least possible cost. Intelligence does not exist for its own sake, but for the practical matter of taking action; it forms the basis for the commander's operational decisions. Command and intelligence are inseparable.

Third, friction in the command-intelligence relationship results more from commanders who mis-understand intelligence and do not participate in the process than any other factor. Understanding means knowledge which permits coping with more complex issues of a problem; participation means taking whatever personal action circumstances require to obtain the necessary results. Commanders who participate in the process obtain results and turn those results into operational

success. The commander's participation is essential, for he wields authority equal to his responsibility. Intelligence officers have no inherent authority; their ability to influence events is solely dependent upon the extent of authority and support they receive from the commander. When the intelligence officer is unable to obtain information because of limited influence, means, or experience, the commander must personally take action, or, if a decision is required, accept the lack of information as part of the uncertainty inherent in the nature of war. When the problem is systemic, change will only occur when driven by the power and influence of commanders. There is no shared responsibility for the success or failure of intelligence; the power, influence, and authority to determine its direction rests with the commander.

Finally, doctrine fails to reinforce the imperative of intelligence as a personal, inherent, function of command. Doctrine is filled with cautious wording and reluctance to drive the point of command responsibility home. Commander's Guide neither contributes to understanding, nor encourages direct participation. Subtleties of phrase can shift the tacit responsibility to the intelligence officer. Comments and actions by many officers today support the view that intelligence is distinct from command; that problems in the field are for the "intelligence community" to solve. Such a view ignores fundamental facts relating to responsibility and

authority of the commander and further erodes the vital bond between commanders and intelligence officers. Organizational beliefs and practices influence the content of doctrine; professional schools teach the form and substance of doctrine and shape the military personalities of officers and men. The product of these factors is that many officers in the Marine Corps today do not view intelligence as a personal, inherent, function of command.

Today, as in the past, achieving success in the command-intelligence relationship is due more to individual effort than to established organizational practice. Successful commanders and intelligence officers overcome the suffocating effect of myths, misperceptions, and intellectual inertia to retain their focus on accomplishing the mission with the most decisive effect on the enemy at the least human possible cost. In other words, success is dependent upon the personalities of the individuals. Nevertheless, those commanders and intelligence officers who have less than satisfactory experiences are not solely, nor even primarily responsible for a dysfunctional relationship; they are products of organizational beliefs and practices that have been reinforced over time and continue today.

## B. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

The Marine Corps must recognize the fact that many officers fail to accept intelligence as a personal, inherent, function of command. The record of the recent and distant past support this conclusion. Those who continue to deny it and impatiently demand that problems with intelligence self-correct argue from a position that fails the litmus test of responsibility and authority. These officers stand in the way of increased combat effectiveness and are gambling with defeat and the lives of their Marines. Admitting that a problem exists is often difficult and painful, but it is a necessary first step toward a decisive solution.

Doctrine, professional education, and training must reflect a new emphasis on the command responsibility for intelligence. Doctrine must impart to the commander the indispensable role he plays in the intelligence process; direct that he participate; and provide practical guidance as to how he can decisively influence the success of the intelligence effort. Education must reflect the new doctrine and provide officers with more than a familiarity of elementary intelligence concepts; professional schools must prepare officers for command by imparting a working knowledge which permits a deeper understanding of more complex issues. Officers must learn to take maximum advantage of the capabilities of intelligence, and they must also know that limits

exist on its ability to reduce uncertainty and risk. Training must incorporate techniques which realistically exercise the intelligence system and provide the opportunity for the vital bond between commander and intelligence officer to form and solidify. The common theme of doctrine, professional education, and training should be that which strengthens and reinforces the command-intelligence relationship.

Those responsible in the Marine Corps must comprehensively study and decisively correct the problems inherent in the vital bond between command and intelligence. Efforts to do so to date contain a fundamental flaw; the emphasis is primarily on improving only one-half of the relationship--the intelligence half. Solutions focus on the training and education of intelligence officers and modifications to intelligence organization, doctrine, and equipment; however, little has been done to change broadly-held beliefs and practices that relate to intelligence. The problems that exist today are not primarily due to intelligence organization, doctrine, numbers of personnel, or equipment, for the Marine Corps is capable of achieving far more with the resources currently available; they are due more to problems of training and education in the relationship between command and intelligence. Current attitudes and behavior in the Marine Corps toward the relationship between command and intelligence represent a major obstacle to a higher level of combat effectiveness.



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